

Spruce Up Almost Any Meal With These 3 Ingredients, From A Chef

mindbodygreen



March 11, 2021 — 0:10 AM

You've just taken a bite out of a dish that lacks flavor. What's your first instinct?

If you thought *just add salt*, you're definitely not alone. And while the right amount of salt can take a meal from bland to mouthwatering, too much salt can be just as damaging to the dish. Rather than using salt as a Band-Aid to the

problem, try getting to the root of it (i.e., the ingredients).

Incorporating a variety of natural flavors can help prevent a meal from being bland in the first place. Aside from spices, chef and certified nutritionist [Serena Poon, C.N.](#), says she relies on three ingredients to make almost any meal taste better:

1. Avocado

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"Avocados deliver an incredible array of vitamins and minerals like folate, vitamins E and K, potassium, riboflavin, and copper," Poon says. "They are also wonderful sources of fiber and omega-3 fatty acids."

And no, it's not all avocado toast and guacamole (but those are great, too.) Poon likes to add avocado to savory soups and salads, as well as sweet smoothies and desserts. The fatty fruit adds a rich and creamy texture, she tells mbg, and a high dose of nutrients.

2. Walnuts

"A handful of walnuts is an excellent source of protein, omega-3 fatty acids, manganese, copper, phosphorus, and

some B vitamins," she says.

Walnuts on their own are a heart-healthy and gut-friendly snack. They're also great for adding to meals, for bonus benefits, while also enhancing the texture and flavor of your dish. Not sure where to use them?

"Walnuts make a nutrient-dense addition to a variety of dishes, including any warm or cold breakfast meal," Poon says. "Think oatmeal or açai bowl, salads, entrees, sauces, pestos, and even as a dessert topping."

3. Blueberries

"Blueberries are one of the most antioxidant-rich foods and also contain vitamins C and K and manganese," Poon tells mbg.

Since they're simultaneously tart and sweet, she says the fruit can complement a range of flavors. "Just a few blueberries can add a little bit of sweetness to yogurt, oatmeal, smoothies, baked goods, and even salads."

Bottom line.

Salt can enhance almost any dish when used in the right proportions. To avoid overdoing it, though, try adding

flavorful ingredients to your dish upfront. If it still needs salt after, sprinkle away.