

Best Leafy Green Vegetables

Everyone knows that you need to eat your vegetables, especially the dark green leafy ones. Green leafy vegetables are very nutrient-dense and incredibly healthy. They are a vital source of antioxidants that are very beneficial to providing **weight loss help**. The U.S. Department of Agriculture recommends that adults consume at least three cups of dark green vegetables each week.

People have often known how nutritious leafy greens are, but still choose to exclude them from their diet. However, if everyone truly understood the powerful capabilities of vegetables, nobody would go without them.

Greens are the Number One food you can eat regularly to help improve your health and boost weight loss. This is because leafy vegetables are full of fiber along with vitamins, minerals, and plant-based substances that help protect you from heart disease, diabetes, and even cancer. Many of the vegetables listed below even help stall the aging process.

Even so, Americans are not eating as many vegetables each day as dietary experts recommend. Here are some of the TOP Green Leafy Vegetables you should try hard to get into as many of your meals as you can stand. If you put just a little thought into it, you can sneak these items in many dishes without ever being able to taste or notice them.

Top Leafy Greens

Kale:

Known as one of the healthiest vegetables on the planet. This nutrition powerhouse offers everything you want in a leafy green, and takes a first-place ranking. It's an excellent source of vitamins A, C, and K, has a good amount of calcium for a vegetable, and also supplies folate and potassium. Kale's ruffle-edged leaves may range in color from cream to purple to black depending on the variety.

Nutritional Info: (One cup) 70 calories, 0g fat, 4g protein, 10g carbs, 5 g fiber,

Benefits: Kale's health benefits are primarily linked to the high concentration and excellent source of antioxidant vitamins A, C, and K and sulphur-containing phytonutrients. Carotenoids and flavonoids are the specific types of antioxidants associated with many of the anti-cancer health benefits.

Kale is also rich in the eye-health promoting lutein and zeaxanthin compounds. Beyond antioxidants, the fiber content of cruciferous kale binds bile acids and helps lower blood cholesterol levels and reduce the risk of heart disease, especially when kale is cooked instead of raw.

Turnip Greens:

If you buy turnips with the tops on, you get two vegetables in one. Turnip leaves are another Southern favorite and are considered a delicacy. More tender than other greens and needing less cooking, this sharp-flavored leaf is low in calories yet loaded with vitamins A, C, and K as well as calcium. Turnip greens leafy, green tops, have grown in popularity across the rest of the United States thanks to their assertive flavor and hearty nutritional profile. When you're buying turnip greens, choose ones with consistent color, crisp leaves and slender stems.

Nutritional Info: (One Cup) 20 calories, .1g fat 1.2g of protein, 4.4g of carbohydrates and 3.5g fiber

Benefits: One of the most notable nutrients present in a serving of turnip greens is vitamin A, which acts as an antioxidant in your body and promotes healthy eyesight, and preventing certain age-related eye disorders. Eating vitamin A-rich foods help your body target and get rid of toxins and free radicals that can contribute to cancer.

Another important nutrient present is iron because it is responsible for the formation and development of healthy red blood cells, which ensure that enough oxygen is circulated throughout your body. An iron deficiency can also lead to anemia, (low red blood cell count) and can cause fatigue, pale skin and breathlessness.

Turnip greens provide calcium which is good for your bones and teeth, and a diet high in calcium may prevent softening of the bones, bone fractures and osteoporosis. A 1-cup serving of turnip greens provides 32 mg of magnesium that helps your body absorb and use calcium. The same serving of turnip greens also contains 5 g of fiber and 1.6 g of protein. Turnip greens also supply potassium, vitamin C and vitamin K. An adult needs 1000 mg of calcium each day, and a 1-cup serving of cooked turnip greens will add 197 mg.

Spinach:

Is one of the most nutritious foods available, as it is low in calories and high in vitamins, spinach is one of the most nutrient-dense foods in existence. It's packed with vitamins A and C, as well as folate. And because heat reduces the green's oxalate content, freeing up its dietary calcium, meaning cooked spinach gives you more nutrition than raw, but is excellent eaten raw in salads. Bags of frozen chopped spinach are more convenient to use than block kinds, and this mild-flavored vegetable can be added to soups, pasta dishes, and casseroles.

Nutritional Info: (One Cup) 7 calories, 0.12g Fat, 0.86g Protein, 1.09g Carbs., 4.3 Fiber

Benefits: Containing more than a dozen individual flavonoid compounds, which work together as cancer-fighting antioxidants. These elements neutralize free radicals in the body. It is an excellent promoter of cardiovascular health because the antioxidant properties (water-soluble in the form of vitamin C and fat-soluble beta-carotene) work together to prevent the harmful oxidation of cholesterol. Oxidized cholesterol is a danger to the heart and arteries. Magnesium in spinach works toward healthy blood pressure levels as well.

Spinach also contains a carotenoid that makes prostate cancers destroy themselves. This same carotenoid, after being changed by the intestines, prevents prostate cancer from reproducing itself. Spinach also contains kaempferol, a strong antioxidant that prevents the formation of cancerous cells. Women who have a high intake of this flavonoid show a reduced risk of ovarian cancer.

Spinach protects your brain function from premature aging and slows old age related effects on your mental capabilities. This is accomplished by preventing the harmful effects of oxidation on your brain. Those who eat vegetables in quantity, especially those of the leafy green variety, experience a decrease in brain function loss.

For recipes and complete text see: <http://thescienceofeating.com/vegetables/best-leafy-green-vegetables/>