



Lifestyle Letter

Wellness News

Good-for-You-Green Foods

Celebrate Spring and boost your health with these amazingly healthy green foods

Everyone knows veggies are a must in any healthy diet, but fewer than 10 percent of the population eat the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables daily.

Even if you're not a fan of green produce, you owe it to yourself and health to try it again so you can reap the tons of benefits that green fruits and veggies can provide.

Try going green with some of these:

Avocados. Avocados contain lutein, an antioxidant that protects eye health and they are rich in vitamin E. Research shows that people who get the most vitamin E from their diet have a lower risk of Alzheimer's disease. Avocados are tasty in salads and soups.

Kale. Kale belongs to the powerhouse family of greens known as cruciferous veggies. All cruciferous vegetables contain cancer-fighting plant compounds and vitamin A, and even anti-inflammatory omega-3 fatty acids.

Brussels Sprouts. Another cruciferous veggie, Brussels Sprouts have vitamin A and C as well as birth-defect fighting folate and blood pressure-balancing potassium. Not into Brussels sprouts or Kale? Consider other cruciferous veggies such as broccoli, arugula and bok choy.

Kiwi. Research shows kiwifruit is surprisingly nutrient-dense. Kiwi provides 230 percent of the recommended daily allowance of vitamin C

(almost twice that of an orange), more potassium than a banana, and 10 percent of the recommended daily allowance of vitamin A and folate. It is also a good source of fiber.

Green Tea. Studies show that green tea is loaded with antioxidants. It's been linked to lowering the risk of heart disease, certain cancers, diabetes, inflammatory bowel disease and more. Steep a cup in the morning to start your day on a super-healthy note.



Basil. Herbs are generally loaded with vitamins and antioxidants and are underrated as a health food. Basil in particular is a good source of vitamin K and iron. Basil also boosts anti-inflammatory and antibacterial properties. Snip some leaves into salads or any Italian dish.

Green Beans. Green beans are loaded with fiber, which can help lower cholesterol and stabilize blood sugar, making them an excellent choice for people with diabetes.

Green Peppers. Green peppers are a good source of many important nutrients, including vitamin C, beta carotene, folate and vitamin K.

Asparagus. This springtime vegetable is rich in vitamin K, C, A and folate. It also has a number of anti-inflammatory nutrients. Asparagus is famous for a healthy dose of inulin, a prebiotic, that promotes digestive health and is high in fiber (about 3 grams per cup) and protein (4 to 5 grams per cup). Asparagus amino acid called asparagine, helps cleanse the body of waste.

Be Fit.

Can Exercise Keep You Young?

We all know that physical activity is beneficial in countless ways, but studies are showing that it may contribute to keeping us young.

A study conducted by the National Academy of Sciences ran an experiment on lab rodents that showed that the rodents that were forced to run on a wheel for 45 minutes three times a week, remained youthful as compared to their sedentary lab mates, who became bald, frail and eventually died. The rats that exercised maintained all of their muscle mass and brain volume. After 1 year, none of the exercising rodents had died of natural causes, as opposed to the sedentary rodents who had all died. The researchers were surprised by the magnitude that exercise had on the animals aging process. They expected the heart to benefit from the exercise but were surprised that it affected every tissue in the body's system. Exercise also sparked the repair of malfunctioning mitochondria through a mechanism outside the known repair pathways. Studies of older humans has shown that weightlifting can improve mitochondria health, as can moderate endurance exercise.

The bottom line - any exercise is better than nothing. If you haven't been active in the past, start walking five minutes a day, then begin to increase your activity level. Remember - it's never too late to start looking young!

Think Well.

10 Ways to Boost Your Emotional Health

When you feel good about yourself, you're better able to manage small hassles as well as more serious problems that occasionally come along. These tips will help boost your self-esteem and keep your emotional health in great shape.

1. **Grow your circle of friends.** It's very important to have a support group of family and friends, people who will listen to you when you need to get things off your chest, so you know you're not alone.

2. **Learn more.** Knowledge is power, if you have a problem, learn whatever you can about the issue or health condition you're facing. The more you know the less you will fear what might happen.

3. **Develop a passion.** Everyone should have at least one hobby they enjoy. Whether it's taking care of plants, collecting antiques, or listening to music, you should have something that brings you joy - a passion that's all yours and that no one can take from you.

4. **Get moving.** Any form of exercise that you enjoy is great! Exercise works for people who have mild to moderate depression. Exercise is a great tool for stress management.

Eat Right.

Fennel, Porcini and Chicken Cacciatore Ingredients

- 1/2 ounce mushroom, porcini, dried
- 1 cup of water
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, extra virgin
- 3 lbs chicken thighs, boneless, skinless
- 1 large pepper, green, bell
- 1 large onion
- 1 large fennel bulb
- 3 cloves of garlic
- 1 tablespoon rosemary, fresh
- 2 tablespoons orange peel (zest) grated
- 1 tablespoon thyme, fresh
- 3 tablespoons vinegar, red wine
- 3/4 cups chicken broth
- 2 tablespoons tomato paste

Preparation

Preheat oven to 350°.

Place mushrooms in a large bowl, pour boiling water over them and let soak.

Heat oil in a large, high-sided skillet or Dutch oven over medium-high heat.

Working in batches, brown chicken on all sides, turning occasionally, 4 to 5 minutes

Transfer the chicken to a 9 x 13 inch baking dish.

Reduce heat to medium and add peppers and onion to the pan, cook, stirring often, until soft, about 3 minutes.

Add garlic, rosemary, orange zest, and thyme, cook stirring and scraping up any brown bits. Remove from the heat.

Drain mushrooms in a fine sieve lined with a paper towel, reserve the soaking liquid. Rinse the mushrooms, then coarsely chop. Stir them into the pan along with the soaking liquid, broth, tomato paste and salt. Return to the heat bring to a simmer, then pour the mixture over the chicken. Cover the baking dish with foil.

Bake the cacciatore until bubbling, about 45 minutes. Let stand for 10 minutes before serving. Makes 8 servings.

Per Serving: Cal. 337., Sat Fat. 4g, Fiber 3g, Carbs. 10g, Protein. 33g., Total Fat 3g.

Be sure to visit "My CreatingWellnessSpace" for more recipe ideas!