

What Would Popeye Do?

Why are Greens so Important?

Currently, American adults eat so few green vegetables that our health is suffering. New dietary guidelines for Americans released January 2005 show there needs to be a 200 to 300 percent increase in our intake of healthy green vegetables. This is a result of poor eating habits. If you want to promote a health in your child as they go from babies to toddlers, adolescents, to young adults and finally enter adulthood, you should start healthy eating habits early.

Dark Green Goodness

Dark green leafy vegetables calorie for calorie, are perhaps the most concentrated source of nutrition of any food. They are a rich source of minerals (iron, potassium, calcium and magnesium) and vitamins (K, C, E and many B vitamins). Vitamin K even more important than we once thought; helps regulate blood clotting, protect bones from osteoporosis, may be a key regulator of inflammation and may help protect us from inflammatory diseases including arthritis, and may help prevent diabetes.

Green vegetables are amazingly nutritious; they are a power house of anti-oxidants rich in chlorophyll. This is the pigment that gives green vegetables their color. In general, the darker green the vegetable is the more nutritious.

Benefits of Greens

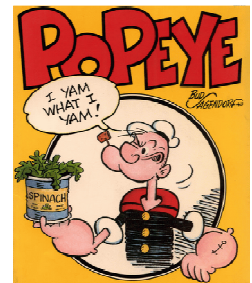
Green vegetables are also a major source of iron and calcium for any diet. Green leafy vegetables are rich in beta-carotene, which can also be converted into vitamin A, and also improve immune function. Millions of children around the world have an increased risk of blindness, and other illnesses because of inadequate dietary vitamin A from green leafy vegetables.

Collard Greens, such as cabbage, broccoli and brussel sprouts, are rich in phytonutrients that help your body detoxify, fight against cancer, support your immune system and help protect your heart and lungs. They have vitamins A, C, B1, B2, B6, and E, manganese, folate, potassium, protein, magnesium, zinc, omega-3 fatty acids and iron.

References: <http://www.suite101.com>, <http://www.vegetarian-nutrition.info>, <http://www.associatedcontent.com>



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Tips for Cooking Green Vegetables

- Eat as produce soon after it has been harvested and buy local whenever possible.
- Store produce in a cool, dark, dry place until consuming.
- Serve immediately rather than keeping cooked foods warming on the stove or in the oven.
- If cooking, steam, sauté gently, or bake rather than boiling.
- Trim and chop as little as possible – keep produce in large chunks.
- Eat produce raw, or at least keep cooking times as short as possible.

