



Green vegetables are the most commonly missing food in modern diets. Learning to incorporate dark leafy greens into the diet is essential to establishing a healthy body and immune system. Greens help build your internal rainforest and strengthen the blood and respiratory system. When you nourish yourself with greens, you may naturally crowd out the foods that make you sick. Leafy green vegetables are also high-alkaline foods. Alkaline minerals in our bodies neutralize acidic conditions caused by the environment. Green vegetables help to replenish our alkaline mineral stores and filter out pollutants.



Green is associated with spring – the time of renewal, refreshment, and vital energy. In traditional Chinese medicine, green is related to the liver, emotional stability, and creativity.

Nutritionally, greens are very high in calcium, magnesium, iron, potassium, phosphorous, zinc, and vitamins A, C, E, and K. They are loaded with fiber, folic acid, chlorophyll, and many other micronutrients and phytochemicals. Although choosing organic is recommended, eating non-organic greens is still preferable to not eating any greens at all.

Benefits of consuming dark leafy greens include:

- blood purification
- cancer prevention
- improved circulation
- strengthened immune system
- promotion of healthy intestinal flora
- promotion of subtle, light, and flexible energy
- improved liver, gall bladder, and kidney function
- cleared congestion, especially in lungs, by reducing mucus

There are a wide variety of greens available year round, so explore options that you can enjoy and eat often. If you get bored with your favorites, be adventurous and experiment with new greens that you've never tried before. Common options include **bok choy, napa cabbage, kale, collards, watercress, mustard greens, broccoli rabe, and dandelion**. Arugula, endive, chicory, lettuce, mesclun, and wild greens are generally eaten raw, but can be consumed in any creative way you enjoy. Spinach, Swiss chard, and beet greens are best eaten in moderation because they are high in oxalic acid, which inhibits the absorption of the calcium in these foods². Rotate a variety of fresh greens into your diet to achieve the maximum benefits.

Cooking Greens

Try a variety of methods like steaming, boiling, sautéing in oil, water sautéing, waterless cooking, or lightly pickling (as in a pressed salad). Boiling helps greens plump and relax. Boil for under a minute to avoid losing nutrients in the water. You can also drink the cooking water as a health-giving broth or tea if you're using organic greens. Steaming makes greens more fibrous and tight, which helps you feel fuller, longer. This is a great method to help curb your appetite for those trying to lose weight. Raw salad is also a convenient preparation for greens. It's refreshing, cooling, and supplies live enzymes.