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UTM EatWell

Know Your Greens

We all know “leafy greens” are good for us, and that we should be eating more of them, but for many students, these greens are a mystery:

- what’s considered a leafy green?
- how do you choose and store them?
- and how can you prepare them so they taste good!?

Varieties of Dark Leafy Green Vegetables (try one this week!)

- Arugula (also known as rocket)
- Bok Choy
- Cabbage
- Collards
- Curly Endive
- Dandelion Greens
- Escarole
- Kale
- Lettuce
- Mustard greens
- Rapini (also known as broccoli raab)
- Spinach
- Swiss chard
- Watercress

Eat Your Greens

Canada’s Food Guide recommends that females need **7 - 8 servings** and males need **8 – 10 servings** of **Vegetables & Fruit** per day (for adults age 19 - 50). The *Food Guide* also recommends that Canadians eat at least one dark green vegetable per day.

Leafy green vegetables are low in calories, and are essentially fat-free. Better than that, they are “nutrient dense”: high in vitamins, minerals and fibre, and rich in cancer-fighting antioxidants!

A *Food Guide* serving of leafy greens is 250 mL (1 cup) raw or 125 mL (1/2 cooked).

Keep it Fresh

When buying leafy greens, look for crisp leaves without any yellow. Store in the refrigerator in a tightly-sealed container or “baggie” for up to 7 days.

Before using, wash the greens under cool, running water; making sure all dirt is gone. Shake or use a salad spinner to dry.

How to Make Leafy Greens Taste Good?

For something simple, try steaming the greens and serving with a teaspoon of olive oil drizzled over the top, balsamic vinegar and pepper. You can also stir-fry, boil or braise them.

You can tell leafy greens are cooked once the greens are wilted and are bright in colour.

Good flavourings for greens are garlic, capers, ginger, chili flakes, red or white wine vinegar, sesame seeds, lemon or maple syrup.

Here are other ways to add greens to your favourite recipes:

- Chop kale, spinach, or Swiss chard finely and add to tomato or meat sauce.
- Use spinach or arugula to make a pesto and use on pasta, chicken or pizza.
- Add chopped greens to a stir-fry near the end of the cooking time. Cook until they are wilted but still bright green.
- Add fresh or frozen chopped greens to vegetable soups, stews or chili.
- Fold cooked greens into scrambled eggs or an omelette.
- Skip the iceberg lettuce in your salads and sandwiches and try arugula, baby spinach, mesclun mix, watercress or baby mustard greens instead.
- Add a handful to the blender when mixing your next fruit smoothie.

Recipe: Sesame Spinach with Lemon

Sesame Spinach with Lemon



Ingredients

- 5 mL (1 tsp.) sesame seeds
- 500 g (1 lb.) bag of pre-washed spinach (or any other leafy green)
- Salt & pepper
- 10 mL (2 tsp.) lemon juice

Directions

Toast sesame seeds in a heavy nonstick skillet over medium heat, about 3 minutes, shaking pan constantly until seeds are browned.

Add spinach, salt and pepper to taste. Cover skillet and cook 2 minutes or until spinach begins to wilt. Remove from heat. Stir in lemon juice before serving.



Need some FREE professional help?

The Health & Counselling Centre at UTM (Davis Building, Room 1123) has a **Registered Dietitian** who can assess your diet and help you make changes. Call (905) 828-5255 to make an appointment.