

Vegetables Bananas and Health Facts

JIM AND MARIE CREGEEN

BRASSICAS

*Brassicas and their benefits
researched from the internet*

Packed with vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, brassicas are the powerhouses of the vegetable kingdom. With its long history, the Brassica group provides more types of vegetables than any other genus. Brassicas are members of the Brassicaceae or mustard family, formerly known as the Cruciferae or crucifer family, hence they are also called crucifers. This diverse grouping includes plants whose leaves, flowers, stems, and roots are cooked and eaten. Some of the most common brassicas include broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower, swedes, and turnips. Less familiar brassicas include broccolo raab, collards, cress, kale, kohlrabi, mustard, and bok choy.

CABBAGE

Cabbage, one of the oldest of the Brassica vegetables has been used in cooking in Europe for more than 4,000 years, giving it an epic history. They are classified as either green or red, although colour ranges from nearly white to reddish-purple. Common green cabbage and red cabbage both have thick leaves and round, tightly-wrapped heads. Napa cabbage, also called Chinese or celery cabbage, has a more delicate texture and flavour than common cabbage. The leaves of the Savoy cabbage are crinkled and thinner than

common cabbage, and Savoy cabbage has a milder flavour. Cabbage, like other brassicas, is high in sulphur, which gives it a strong aroma while cooking. Red cabbage may turn a greyish blue when cooked in hard water. Often vinegar or another acid is used to counteract this tendency.

BROCCOLI

Broccoli, another popular member of the Brassica clan, is believed to be a vegetable native to the eastern Mediterranean. Calabrese is a variety of broccoli which originated in the Italian province of Calabria. The word broccoli is Italian, from the Latin brachium, meaning arm or branch. Broccoli may also be white or purple (which turns green when cooked).

BRUSSELS SPROUTS

Brussels sprouts are tiny heads of cabbage that grow on tall stalks with leaves on top and look somewhat like miniature palm trees. They are named after Brussels, Belgium, where they were first discovered around 1750. While usually a green vegetable, there are also red varieties such as Falstaff. Smaller Brussels sprouts are tastier for cooking, and garden-grown have a nuttier, sweeter taste than those from the supermarket.

CAULIFLOWER

Cauliflower originated in the Middle East and comes in white, green, and purple heads. There is even a new orange variety

called Citris. As a vegetable, cauliflower is difficult to grow and consequently more expensive to buy in the supermarket than most of its Brassica cousins. Cauliflower, like broccoli, consists of unopened flower buds; the head of the cauliflower is called the curd. Packed with vitamins, one serving of cauliflower in cooking can supply a whole day's worth of vitamin C.

MORE INFORMATION

Since the Brassica family is so large, more of its members can be found on the internet. The brassicas include a diverse array of colours, textures, and tastes, all packed with vitamins and disease-fighting nutrients. Growing these on your allotments or adding them to your grocery cart will help to keep you and your family in the peak of health!

CUCUMBER an amazing vegetable

1. Cucumbers contain most of the vitamins you need every day. Just one cucumber contains Vitamin B1, Vitamin B2, Vitamin B3, Vitamin B5, Vitamin B6, Folic Acid, Vitamin C, Calcium, Iron, Magnesium, Phosphorus, Potassium and Zinc.
2. Feeling tired in the afternoon, put down the caffeinated soda and pick up a cucumber. Cucumbers are a good source of B Vitamins and Carbohydrates that can provide that quick pick-me-up that can last for hours.
3. Tired of your bathroom mirror fogging up after a shower? Try rubbing a cucumber slice along the mirror, it will eliminate the fog and provide a soothing, spa-like fragrance.
4. Are grubs and slugs ruining your allotment? Place a few slices in a small aluminium pie tin and your garden will be free of pests all season long. The chemicals in the cucumber react with the aluminium to give off a scent undetectable to humans but drive garden pests crazy and make them flee the area.
5. Looking for a fast and easy way to remove cellulite before going out or to the pool? Try rubbing a slice or two of cucumbers along your problem area for a few minutes, the phytochemicals (<http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Phytochemical>) in the cucumber cause the collagen in your skin to tighten, firming up the outer layer and reducing the visibility of cellulite. Works great on wrinkles too!!!
6. Want to avoid a hangover or terrible headache? Eat a few cucumber slices before going to bed and wake up refreshed and headache free. Cucumbers contain enough sugar, B vitamins and electrolytes to replenish essential nutrients the body lost, keeping everything in equilibrium, avoiding both a hangover and headache!!
7. Looking to fight off that afternoon or evening snacking binge? Cucumbers have been used for centuries and often used by European trappers, traders and explorers for quick meals to thwart off starvation.
8. Have an important meeting or job





calm the nervous system.

Overweight and at work

Studies at the Institute of Psychology in Austria found pressure at work leads to gorging on comfort food like chocolate and chips. Looking at 5,000 hospital patients, researchers found the most obese were more likely to be in high-pressure jobs. The report concluded that to avoid panic-induced food cravings we need to control our blood sugar levels by snacking on high carbohydrate foods every two hours to keep levels steady.

Ulcers

The banana is used as the dietary food against intestinal disorders because of its soft texture and smoothness. It is the only raw fruit that can be eaten without distress in over-chronicler cases. It also neutralizes over-acidity and reduces irritation by coating the lining of the stomach.

Temperature control

Many other cultures see bananas as a 'cooling' fruit that can lower both the physical and emotional temperature of expectant mothers. In Thailand, for example, pregnant women eat bananas to ensure their baby is born with a cool temperature.

Seasonal Affective Disorder (SAD)

Bananas can help SAD sufferers because they contain the natural mood enhancer Tryptophan.

Smoking

Bananas can also help people trying to give up smoking. The B6 and B12 they contain, as well as the potassium and magnesium found in them, helps the body recover from the effects of nicotine withdrawal.

Stress

Potassium is a vital mineral which helps normalize the heartbeat, sends oxygen to the brain and regulates your body's water balance. When we are stressed, our metabolic rate rises, thereby reducing our potassium levels. These can be rebalanced with the help of a high-potassium banana snack.

Strokes

According to research in 'The New England Journal of Medicine', eating bananas as part of a regular diet can cut the risk of death from strokes by as much as 40%.

So, a banana really is a natural remedy for many ills. When you compare it to an apple, it has four times the protein, twice the carbohydrates, three times the phosphorus, five times the vitamin A and iron, and twice the other vitamins and minerals. A banana is also rich in potassium and is one of the best value foods around. So maybe its time to change that well-known phrase so that we say, 'A banana a day keeps the doctor away' !!

And for gardeners – If your roses are covered with Aphids, drape banana skins over the branches. It's amazing, but in a day or less, they are GONE!

interview and you realize that you don't have enough time to polish your shoes? Rub a freshly cut cucumber over the shoe, its chemicals will provide a quick and durable shine that not only looks great but also repels water.

9. Out of WD 40 and need to fix a squeaky hinge? Take a cucumber slice and rub it along the problematic hinge, and voila, the squeak is gone!
10. Stressed out and don't have time for a massage, facial or visit to the spa? Cut up an entire cucumber and place it in a boiling pot of water, the chemicals and nutrients from the cucumber will react with the boiling water and be released in the steam, creating a soothing, relaxing aroma that has been shown to reduce stress in new mothers and college students during final exams.
11. Just finish a business lunch and realize you don't have gum or mints? Take a slice of cucumber and press it to the roof of your mouth with your tongue for 30 seconds to eliminate bad breath, the phytochemicals will kill the bacteria in your mouth responsible for causing bad breath.
12. Looking for a 'green' way to clean your faucets, sinks or stainless steel? Take a slice of cucumber and rub it on the surface you want to clean, not only will it remove years of tarnish and bring back the shine, but it won't leave streaks and won't harm your fingers or fingernails while you clean.
13. Using a pen and made a mistake? Take the outside of the cucumber and slowly use it to erase the pen writing, also works great on crayons and markers that the kids have used to decorate the walls!!

BANANAS AND YOUR HEALTH

Huge nutritional benefits to be derived From eating the humble banana .

Bananas contain three natural sugars - sucrose, fructose and glucose combined with fibre, a banana gives an instant, sustained and substantial boost of energy. Research has proven that just two bananas provide enough energy for a strenuous 90-minute workout. No wonder the banana is the number one fruit with the world's leading athletes. But energy isn't the only way a banana can help us keep fit. It can also help overcome or prevent a substantial number of illnesses and conditions, making it a must to add to our daily diet.

Depression

According to a recent survey undertaken by MIND amongst people suffering from depression, many felt much better after eating a banana. This is because bananas

contain Tryptophan, a type of protein that the body converts into serotonin, known to make you relax, improve your mood and generally make you feel better.

PMS

Forget the pills — eat a banana. The vitamin B6 it contains regulates blood glucose levels, which can affect your mood.

Anaemia

High in iron, bananas can stimulate the production of haemoglobin in the blood and so helps in cases of anaemia.

Blood Pressure

This unique tropical fruit is extremely high in potassium yet low in salt, making it the perfect way to beat blood pressure. So much so, the US Food and Drug Administration has just allowed the banana industry to make official claims for the fruit's ability to reduce the risk of blood pressure and stroke.

Brain Power

200 students at a Twickenham (Middlesex England) school were helped through their exams this year by eating bananas at breakfast, break, and lunch in a bid to boost their brain power. Research has shown that the potassium-packed fruit can assist learning by making pupils more alert.

Constipation

High in fibre, including bananas in the diet can help restore normal bowel action, helping to overcome the problem without resorting to laxatives.

Hangovers

One of the quickest ways of curing a hangover is to make a banana milkshake, sweetened with honey. The banana calms the stomach and, with the help of the honey, builds up depleted blood sugar levels, while the milk soothes and rehydrates your system.

Heartburn

Bananas have a natural antacid effect in the body, so if you suffer from heartburn, try eating a banana for soothing relief.

Morning sickness

Snacking on bananas between meals helps to keep blood sugar levels up and avoid morning sickness.

Mosquito bites

Before reaching for the insect bite cream, try rubbing the affected area with the inside of a banana skin. Many people find it amazingly successful at reducing swelling and irritation.

Nerves

Bananas are high in B vitamins that help