

MINUTE NUTRITION NEWS

March 2017

Eating Local and Seasonal: Cucumbers

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Spring is finally here! While we are ready to jump back into eating fresh Ontario grown produce, this is also the time when our gardens and farms are just gearing up for the season. So in the mean time, how about some Canadian greenhouse cucumbers to satisfy that craving for a refreshing spring recipe?

Nutritional Goodness

Cucumbers are low in calories and a source of potassium and vitamin C. It is a vegetable that is high in water content and great to incorporate into meals if you are looking to manage portion sizes. Read on to find out why.



Volumetrics with Cucumbers

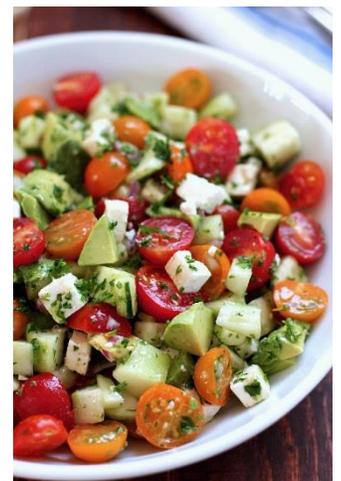
Volumetrics is a technique developed by Professor Barbara J. Rolls at Pennsylvania State University to help people feel more satisfied after eating. Often times, people may reduce the amount of food they eat in attempt to eat healthier portions. However, this can leave us feeling still hungry and wanting more food later on.

According to Professor Rolls' research, incorporating lean protein, fibre, high water content, and/or high volume foods into our meals can help us feel more satisfied and full after eating. For example, compare 2 cups of grapes with ¼ cup of raisins. Both contain the same amount of calories, but eating the grapes would likely leave us feeling more satisfied compared to eating the raisins. This is because grapes have a higher water content and take up more space (aka volume) in our stomachs compared to the raisins. This better allows our stomachs to register that we have eaten an adequate amount, and in turn send a signal to our brain telling us that we have eaten enough.

Cucumbers are another food that contains a few of these key volumetric components. It has fibre in its skins that can help us feel fuller for longer after eating. Just like the grapes (and most fruits and vegetables in general), it is also a high volume food, meaning it takes up a lot of space in our stomach but not for a lot of calories. Consider this - an entire cup of cucumbers contains only 16 calories!

Ways to Eat More Cucumber

- Mediterranean style salad with diced cucumbers, red onion, tomatoes, chickpeas, feta cheese, olive oil and balsamic vinegar.
- Mexican style salad with diced cucumbers, corn, tomatoes, avocado and red kidney beans. Flavour with cilantro, jalapeños, lime juice, olive oil, cumin or chili powder, salt and pepper.
- Indian cucumber raita made with cucumbers, yogurt, cumin and coriander. Use as a dip or a spread in sandwiches and wraps, or enjoy it traditionally as a side dish paired with a spicy main entrée.
- Asian style cucumber salad (see recipe on back).
- Use a spiralizer to make cucumber noodles or ribbons as a base for salads.



RECIPE OF THE MONTH

March 2017

Asian Inspired Cucumber Salad

A refreshing salad that is sweet, tangy and crunchy all in one. You can whip this up quickly if you need a simple addition to pair with your meal. On the other hand, you can also serve this if you need an appetizer that is unique and different to impress your guests. No matter the occasion, you will be sure to enjoy this refreshing salad all through your summer!



Makes 1 serving (1 serving = approx. 1 cup)

Ingredients:

1	English cucumber
¼ tsp	Salt
½ tbsp	Sugar
¼ tsp	Soy sauce, low sodium
2 tbsp	Rice vinegar
¼ tsp	Sesame oil
½ tsp	White sesame seeds, toasted (optional)

Directions:

1. Cut the cucumber into thin slices and place in a colander. Add salt and rub thoroughly into cucumber slices. Set aside for five minutes.
2. In a separate bowl, combine sugar, soy sauce and rice vinegar and stir until sugar dissolves.
3. Return to the cucumbers and rinse with cold water. Then squeeze the cucumbers to remove excess water. Transfer cucumber slices to vinegar mixture. Mix well. (Optional: Before serving, drain some of the excess vinegar mixture from the cucumbers.)
4. Drizzle with sesame oil.
5. Optional: Toast sesame seeds in a toaster oven for about two minutes until just starting to brown. Garnish with toasted sesame seeds.

Nutrition information (Per Serving):

**Values are estimated with 50% seasoning removed by rinsing and/or draining*

70 calories, Fat 2 g (3% DV), Carbohydrate 10 g (3% DV), Fibre 3 g (12%), Protein 3 g, Sodium 370 mg (15% DV), Sugars 7 g, Vitamin A 10%, Vitamin C 30%, Calcium 6%, Iron 6%

Recipe adapted from <http://www.japanesecooking101.com/sunomono-cucumber-salad-recipe/>