

## - Vegetables

# Superhealthy leafy greens you should be eating

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LEAFY greens are a great way to improve your health as they possess many vital nutrients, vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. Nutritionist Dr Swrajit Sarkar highly recommends getting more of the following salad leaves in your diet.

### Spinach

Spinach is easy to get all year round, and is full of iron, calcium, potassium and vitamins B6, C and K. It is also a good source of antioxidants, which can reduce the risk of many diseases, including heart disease and certain cancers.

It's best eaten uncooked, as part of a salad, as cooking tends to destroy the naturally occurring polyphenols and flavanols in the leaves. Certain polyphenols and flavonoids may reduce the chance of developing certain cancers, cardiovascular diseases, diabetes and neurodegenerative diseases, such as Alzheimer's disease.

### Kale

Kale has a unique taste that can vary somewhat depending on its variety and how it's prepared. If you can handle bitter taste, kale is packed with important micronutrients such as calcium, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, potassium, zinc, copper, manganese and selenium. It is also a good source of vitamins, including vitamins A, B, E, C and K.

Avoid blanching and boiling kale as it can reduce the amount of watersoluble minerals, vitamins and phytochemicals in the leaves. Kale can be eaten uncooked in salads.

A cup of uncooked kale (21g) is just nine calories.

### Silverbeet

My third choice is silverbeet, which has a slightly sweet flavour, and has good amounts of vitamins A and C. And even a small amount of silverbeet (about 175g) can fulfil your daily requirement of vitamin K, which is important for blood clotting and healthy bones.

It also has essential minerals such as iron, copper, potassium and calcium.

### Rocket

If you're in the mood for a leafy green with a fresh, tangy, slightly bitter and peppery taste, consider adding rocket to your plate. It's been consumed by humans since at least Roman times, and is a popular topping on pizzas.

Rocket, also known as arugula, is packed with nitrates and is also rich in vitamins K and C, and calcium and polyphenols.

### Bok choy

If you're looking for a leafy green with a gentle flavour and satisfying texture, bok choy is a great choice. This variety of Chinese white cabbage can be used in stirfries, soups, salads or sauteed as a side dish. It is rich in fibre as well as various vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. This leafy green can help maintain bone health, immunity, vision, heart health, blood pressure and possibly prevent certain types of cancer.

— The Conversation.

Dr Swrajit Sarkar is a senior lecturer in nutrition at the University of London