

GO Green!

by Kelly Stripling, Certified Biblical Health Coach

Green says spring and summer the way no other color can! This tidbit will feature some of those yummy green veggies and herbs that are readily available to tempt our tummies during this season. Best of all, these foods require little to no preparation to enjoy. In fact, less cooking ensures that all vital nutrients are left intact, ready for use by the body.

Asparagus – Fresh asparagus, not the canned variety, is one of the best sources of folate, which is essential for heart health. It also contains vitamin K. Steam lightly, sprinkle with a bit of sea salt, and enjoy.

Peas – This is a wonderful spring and summer vegetable. My family especially enjoys picking young sugar snaps and eating them right from the vine. Peas of all varieties are a wonderful source of B vitamins, as well as being full of antioxidants, phytonutrients, and carotenoids, which play an important role in regulating cholesterol and supporting a healthy heart.

Spinach – Its rich green hue is a clue to its wide array of nutrients. It is a good source of vitamins A and K and contains cancer-fighting properties and antioxidants. Spinach salad is one of the season's delights!

Lettuce – Romaine is champion of the lettuce family. It contains both vitamin C and beta carotene, which work together to prevent arterial plaque. It also contains chromium, which is important for maintaining blood sugar levels.

Green Beans - Another green food that offers plenty of nutrition, green beans contain vitamins A and C and beta carotene, working together to promote a healthy immune system and tackle free radicals.

Collards – These greens are famous in southern cooking but maybe not so well-known for their health benefits. Two of its carotenoids fight eye degeneration, and it contains sulphur compounds that have been found to help decrease the incidence of some cancers.

Basil – This herb enhances many Italian dishes. It is worth expanding your use of basil to gain the benefits of its vitamin A and flavinoids, that protect cell structures.

Dandelions – This is often thought of as a weed that curses our lawns, causing us to have to mow more frequently. However, the health benefits of the lowly dandelion are wonderful. Delicious when added to salads, the leaves, buds and yellow flowers are edible. Dandelions are rich in vitamins A, B, C and D and beta carotene, as well as being a good source of iron, zinc and potassium.