

# FOOD FOR FITNESS AND FUN

April - 2008

Care for your health this spring by eating plenty of fruits and vegetables. I've included several preparation ideas for you. Enjoy! Jan Temple

## PARSLEY: MORE THAN DECORATION

Fresh parsley is so rich in nutrients that it's a shame to use it only as a garnish! A half cup of chopped parsley provides beta carotene, over 50% of the daily value (DV) for vitamin C, 12% DV for folate, 16 % DV vitamin A, 10% DV for iron, 5 % DV for potassium and 4% DV for calcium, and for only 10 calories. Parsley contains substances that help reduce the risk of developing cancer. Parsley may be eaten as a vegetable or simply added to dishes for flavor instead of salt or fat.



**Which kind do I buy?** There are only two varieties of parsley commonly found in American grocery stores. **Curly parsley** is often used as a garnish but is also good for cooking, has tightly curled ruffled leaves and a mild flavor. **Flat-leaf or Italian parsley** has a stronger flavor and is used primarily for cooking. In other parts of the world, different varieties of parsley are grown for their edible roots and stalks.

**How do I purchase and store parsley?** Fresh parsley should be bright green and not wilted. Rinse it well to remove any soil that may be trapped in the leaves, then spin or shake it to dry. Wrap the parsley in paper towels or a clean cloth and store in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. It will keep for about a week. To freeze parsley for later use, place minced parsley leaves into ice cube trays, cover with water and freeze. Frozen cubes may be added directly to soups or stews.

**Is there any easy way to chop it?** A large heavy knife, such as a chef's knife, makes it easy to chop parsley. Hold the parsley together in a bunch and cut off the stems just below the leaves. (The small stem parts holding the leaves may be chopped and eaten, and even the lower stems are fine if cooked.) With one hand, hold the point of the knife against the cutting board and use the other hand to guide the knife in small up-and-down chopping motions across the leaves. Stop occasionally to scrape the leaves into a pile and change the angle of chopping.

## What can I make with parsley?

- Stir chopped parsley into soups, sauces, stews and casseroles just before serving to retain its bright color, fresh taste and vitamin C.
- Parsley is great in a sandwich! Mix it with a spread, or sprinkle it in.
- Potatoes and parsley were made for each other. Sprinkle chopped parsley over steamed potatoes or stir it into mashed potatoes.
- Chopped parsley can be tossed with a salad or pureed into the dressing.
- Classic parsley toppings are elegant but easy. Chop equal amounts of parsley and green onions or shallots for a persillade, or combine parsley, garlic and lemon zest for a gremolata. Both are good on vegetables or fish.

## Did you know . . . ?

- Parsley freshens the breath after eating onions or garlic. It was often put on the plate at meal time for this purpose.

## PARSLEY HUMMUS — SERVES 8

1 15 oz. can garbanzo beans, rinsed and drained	2 Tablespoons lemon juice
1/4 cup water	2 cloves garlic, minced
1 Tablespoon olive oil	1/2 cup chopped parsley

In a food processor or blender, combine all ingredients except parsley and process until smooth. Pulse or stir in the parsley. Serve as a spread or dip for bread, crackers or vegetables. Each 1/4 cup serving: 71 calories, 2 g fat, 0 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 137 mg sodium, 11 g carbohydrate, 2 g fiber, 2.5 g protein.

Source: *Communicating Food for Health, April 2002*

## NUTTY CABBAGE SLAW — SERVES 4

1/3 cup non-fat yogurt	3 cups cabbage, shredded
1 teaspoon canola oil	1/3 cup walnuts chopped
1 Tbsp red wine vinegar	1/4 cup raisins
1 1/2 teaspoon sugar	1/2 C red peppers, chopped
	1/4 C green onions, chopped

Whisk yogurt, oil, vinegar and sugar together in large mixing bowl. Add the rest of the ingredients and mix well. Serve immediately or refrigerate for later use, up to 12 hours.

Each 1 cup serving: 131 calories, 7.5 g fat, 0.5 g saturated fat, 3 mg cholesterol, 23 mg sodium, 15 g carbohydrate, 2.5 g fiber, 3 g protein.

Source: *Communicating Food for Health, April 2000*

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## FOCUS ON FOLATE

Folic acid and folate are different terms for the same B vitamin. Folate is the name of the vitamin as it is found naturally in foods. Folic acid is the synthetic form found in vitamin supplements and added to fortified foods. Synthetic folic acid is about twice as absorbable as the folate occurring naturally in foods. Relying solely on supplements or fortified foods for folate means missing out on fiber and all the other valuable nutrients, such as iron, thiamin, niacin, riboflavin and vitamin C, which occur naturally in folate-rich foods. Folate may play a role in the prevention of heart disease and cancer. Plant foods such as legumes are the very best sources of folate while green leafy vegetables and citrus fruits are excellent sources.

### EXCELLENT SOURCES OF FOLATE

Lentils cooked 1 cup 358 mcg  
 Black eyed peas 1 cup 358 mcg  
 Roasted soy nuts 1 cup 351 mcg  
 Pinto beans cooked 1 cup 294 mcg  
 Chickpeas 1 cup 294 mcg  
 Kidney beans 1 cup 229 mcg  
 Green soybeans cooked 1 cup 200 mcg  
 Pinto beans canned 1 cup 145 mcg  
 Spinach cooked 1/2 cup 131 mcg  
 Asparagus 6 spears 131 mcg  
 Split peas 1 cup 129 mcg  
 Avocado 1 cup 113 mcg  
 Orange juice from concentrate 8 oz. 109 mcg  
 Soybeans cooked 1 cup 92 mcg  
 Collards cooked 1/2 cup 88 mcg  
 Peanuts 1/4 cup 87 mcg  
 Wheat germ 1/4 cup 80 mcg



### GOOD SOURCES OF FOLATE:

Romaine 1 cup 75 mcg  
 Fresh orange juice 1 cup 75 mcg  
 Cauliflower 1 cup 64 mcg  
 Broccoli 1 cup 62 mcg  
 Artichoke 1 60 mcg  
 Canned pineapple juice 1 cup 57 mcg  
 Blackberries 51 mcg  
 Navel orange 47 mcg  
 Brussels sprouts cooked 1/2 cup 46 mcg  
 Wheat bran 1 cup 45 mcg  
 Tofu firm 1/2 cup 41 mcg  
 Cabbage shredded 1 cup 40 mcg



Source: Communicating Food for Health, April 1999

## APRIL IS CANCER AWARENESS MONTH

Nutrition experts agree that eating right, exercise and weight control can reduce cancer risk by 30 to 40 percent. Use the tips below to take control of your health. Note: Cancer survivors may also benefit by reducing the risk of reoccurrence.

- Eat a plant-based diet centered on whole grains, legumes, fruits and vegetables.
- Eat 3 ounces of fatty fish such as salmon, tuna, or sardines twice a week.
- If eaten at all, limit intake of red meat to less than 3 ounces daily.
- Limit consumption of salted foods and use of cooking and table salt. Use herbs and spices to season foods.
- Increase daily dietary fiber to 25 to 30 grams.
- Snack on nuts but limit daily portion to 1/3 cup.
- Limit cured meats (i.e. hot dogs, sausage, and bacon).
- Limit alcohol to less than two drinks a day for men and one drink a day for women
- Reduce total dietary fat by limiting animal fats and opt for healthier monounsaturated fat (olive oil, canola oil, and avocados) and omega-3 fats (salmon, flaxseeds, and walnuts).
- Stay physically active. Regular exercise helps to maintain a healthy body weight and gives the immune system a boost.

Source: *Communicating Food for Health, April 2002*

### ***BROCCOLI-MUSHROOM OMELETTE – Serves 2***

1 teaspoon olive oil	Garlic powder to taste
1 cup sliced mushrooms	Black pepper to taste
1 cup broccoli florettes	6 egg whites

Heat oil in large non-stick skillet over medium high heat. Add the mushrooms, broccoli and seasonings and sauté until golden and tender, about 4-5 minutes. Add the egg whites and scramble lightly, spreading flat and thin in the pan. Serve hot, dividing between 2 plates. Optional garnish: top with a little grated parmesan cheese or chopped fresh herbs. ***VARIATION: STIR FRY OMELETTE:*** Substitute 2 cups of frozen stir fry veggies in place of the mushrooms and broccoli. Serve with lite soy sauce.

*Each 1 cup serving: 95 calories, 3 g fat, 0.5 g saturated fat, 0 mg cholesterol, 178 mg sodium, 4.5 g carbohydrate, 1.5 g fiber, 13 g protein.*

Source: *Communicating Food for Health, April 2002*

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