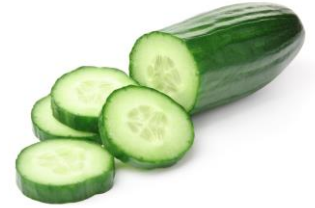


Food for Thought

June 2024

June is National Cucumber Month

Cucumbers are a great choice for the hot summer months. They are tasty, hydrating, and economical. Cucumbers are part of the gourd family. The gourd family also includes melons, squashes, and pumpkins.



What are some of the health benefits of cucumbers?

- **Cucumbers help with hydration.** Cucumbers are 96% water. Water not only helps keep your body and cells hydrated, but the high-water content makes your body feel full longer.
- **Cucumbers are full of nutrients.**
 - Fiber - good for your gut and heart
 - Vitamin K - helps your blood clot and is good for your bones
 - Vitamin A - good for your eyes, skin, and immune system
 - Vitamin C - helps with wound healing
 - Chlorophyll - a powerful phytonutrient
 - Potassium - needed for muscle contraction

Choosing a cucumber:

- Look for large, unbroken, dark-green skin with a waxy appearance. Avoid cucumbers with yellowing or soft spots.

Storing cucumbers:

- Store cucumbers, unwashed, in loose or perforated plastic bags in the vegetable crisper of the refrigerator. Store for up to 5-7 days. Rinse under running water and enjoy!

Enjoying cucumbers:

- **Add to salads!** Dice and add to pasta, chicken, shrimp or tuna salad.
- **Cool coleslaw.** Mix in thin slices of peeled, seeded cucumber for a cool, smooth addition.
- **Wrap 'em!** Add them to cooked lean ground beef and chopped tomatoes and wrap in a tortilla.
- **Make them into a scoop!** Slice unpeeled cucumbers into thick slices and scoop hummus.
- **A refreshing appetizer.** Top a slice of party rye or pumpernickel bread with a smear of light mayo, a fat slice of cucumber and a sprinkle of lemon pepper for a delicious appetizer.
- **Cukes, Tomato, & Avocado** Top off this combination for a delicious, chunky salad.
- **Add them to your favorite smoothie.**



Watermelon Cucumber Salad

- ½ cup mozzarella pearls
- 1 cups diced cucumber
- 2 cups diced watermelon
- 2 tbsp minced basil
- 8 tbsp balsamic reduction



1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Dice cucumber and watermelon, combine with mozzarella and basil.
3. Heat balsamic vinegar in a pan until it reduces and thickens.
4. Drizzle balsamic reduction on top right before enjoying.

West Coast Pita Treat

- 4 whole wheat pitas, 6 ½ inches in diameter
- 2 cups cucumber, peeled and very thinly sliced
- 2 cups fresh tomato, thinly sliced
- 1 avocado, peeled, pitted and thinly sliced
- 2 teaspoons onion powder
- 2 teaspoons chili powder
- ½ cup fat-free ranch salad dressing
- 2 cups romaine lettuce, chopped



1. Wash hands with soap and water.
2. Cut pitas in half. Open pita halves slightly and cut completely in half.
3. Put equal amounts of sliced cucumber, tomato and avocado on top of 8 of the pita halves.
4. Mix dressing with onion powder and chili powder, then drizzle equally on top of the vegetables. Top with chopped lettuce and remaining pita half. Cut each pita sandwich in half and enjoy.

Sources: Top 10 Ways to Enjoy Cucumbers - Have A Plant (fruitsandveggies.org); https://www.azed.gov/sites/default/files/2020/11/FFVP_Cucumber%20Handout.pdf; Watermelon Cucumber Salad - Have A Plant (fruitsandveggies.org) <https://fruitsandveggies.org/recipes/west-coast-pita-treat/> retrieved 06/03/24

Eat Smart Idaho offers FREE classes that can help you learn how to eat well for less! During this challenging time stay tuned for some upcoming classes offered online.

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