

[IMAGE]

Time to Go Green

By Editorial Staff

Take a look the overwhelming majority of items on fast-food and restaurant menus and you'll notice a disturbing omission, particularly if we focus on color: green. You'll see plenty of brown / beige (meat, French fries, bread, etc.), but far too little green in the form of vegetables. The problem: We're fast becoming a fast-food world, eating most of our meals on the go or out of the microwave. What we sacrifice in the process is a whole lot of nutrition, especially when it comes to the health benefits green vegetables provide. Here are a few examples of what we're missing:

- *Broccoli* is a nutrient powerhouse loaded with vitamins and cancer-fighting compounds. Research suggests broccoli consumption reduces cancer risk, particularly colon and lung cancer; and decreases the risk of obesity, diabetes and heart disease.
- *Spinach* is another nutrient-dense green veggie. It's also high in compounds called flavonoids that have been shown to fight free radicals, which can build up in the body and lead to cancer. It's also high in vitamins C and A, which perform similar functions in reducing free radicals throughout the body.
- go green - Copyright © Stock Photo / Register Mark For starters, a *green bell pepper* contains twice the vitamin C of an orange! (To learn why we need vitamin C, click here.) It's high in antioxidants, helping protect the body against cancer (again, by scavenging free radicals). Green peppers are also high in zeaxanthin, which has been shown to promote eye health and may reduce the risk of developing eye disorders with age.
- *Green beans* provide flavonoids and antioxidants to help fight / prevent cancer. They also contain epicatechins, which have been shown to improve heart health, among other protective abilities.

Are you ready to take the green challenge? For the next week, follow your standard diet, keeping a keen eye on color. How much green finds its way onto your plate? If it's low, consider adding the above and other green vegetables as staples of your eating plan moving forward. Talk to your doctor for more information on the power of green.

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