Nutrition News for Seniors
EAT WELL
Provided by the Nutrition Division of the Westchester County Department of Senior Programs and Services

Fresh Herbs: Small Leaves, Big Benefits

Add Flavor, Nutrition, and Variety to Healthy Meals



As we age, changes in taste and smell can make food seem less flavorful. Fresh herbs are an easy way to add taste, aroma, and color to meals without relying on extra salt. They can also contribute beneficial plant compounds that support overall health.

Why Use Fresh Herbs?

While herbs are typically used in small amounts, using them regularly can add variety and nutrition to everyday meals. Fresh herbs do more than make food taste good. They can help:

✓ Enhance flavor without adding sodium
✓ Make vegetables, soups, and whole grains more appealing
✓ Add vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants
✓ Encourage healthy cooking at home
✓ Introduce variety and new flavors to meals

Herb Spotlight: PARSLEY



Parsley is one of the most versatile herbs and is often overlooked as just a garnish. Nutrition benefits include:

- Provides vitamin K, which supports bone health
- Contains vitamin C and vitamin A
- Rich in antioxidants that help protect cells from damage

Easy Ways to Use Parsley:

- Stir into soups before serving
- Sprinkle over roasted vegetables
- Add to tuna, egg, or chickpea salad
- Mix into rice, quinoa, or pasta dishes
- Blend into homemade salad dressings

TIP: Chop extra parsley and freeze it in small portions for later use.

WESTCHESTER COUNTY
Kenneth W. Jenkins, County Executive
Mae Carpenter, Commissioner
Department of Senior Programs and Services

Herb Spotlight: BASIL



Basil is known for its sweet, fragrant flavor. It pairs well with many summer foods. Nutrition benefits include:

- Antioxidants that help fight oxidative stress
- Provides small amounts of vitamin K and other nutrients
- Adds flavor without extra fat, sugar, or salt

Easy Ways to Use Basil:

- Add to sliced tomatoes and cucumbers
- Toss into pasta dishes
- Mix into salads
- Stir into soups just before serving
- Blend into pesto

TIP: Add chopped basil to watermelon, strawberries, or peaches for a fresh summer twist.

Suggestions for using Other Fresh Herbs
Cilantro – Use with avocados, beans, rice, fish, pork, and salsas (Mexican/Asian cuisines). Add raw at the very end of preparation.
Dill – Use with salmon, cucumbers, potatoes, eggs, and creamy dressings. Add raw or at the end to keep the fresh flavor.
Rosemary – Use with lamb, beef, roasted potatoes, chicken, and mushrooms. Add at the beginning of cooking so the flavor can infuse
Thyme – Use with soups, stews, roasted root vegetables, and poultry. Stands up well to long cooking times.

Stir Fries	Salad Dressings	Marinades	Soups & Stews
Sauces, Dips, Pesto	Sandwiches	Fruit Salads	Drinks -"mocktails"

Fresh or Dried Herbs? Which are Better?

Many people avoid buying fresh herbs because they worry the herbs will spoil before they can use them. If that's the case, try these tips to get the most out of fresh herbs:

- Store herbs in the refrigerator with stems in a glass of water or wrapped loosely in a damp paper towel.
- Freeze chopped herbs in ice cube trays with water or olive oil.
- Grow herbs in a sunny window or container garden. Use only what you need.
- Buy one herb each week and find several ways to use it.

TIP: To substitute fresh herbs with dried in recipes, use 1 teaspoon of dried herbs for every 1 tablespoon of fresh herbs.

TIP: When cooking with herbs, add dried herbs early on so they can rehydrate and release their oils. Add fresh herbs during the last 5 to 10 minutes (or as a raw garnish) to preserve their bright aroma.

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RECIPE CORNER: Lemon Dill Yogurt Cup

Citrusy, herby, and perfect with veggies or crackers (1 serving)

1 (5-6 ounce) single-serve container plain non-fat Greek Yogurt
1 to 2 teaspoons fresh lemon juice, to taste
1 tablespoon chopped fresh dill
½ teaspoon lemon zest, optional for extra zing
Pinch salt and black pepper

Instructions: Mix everything together right in the container until smooth and creamy. Taste and adjust lemon juice, dill, and seasoning (savory) as desired,. Enjoy immediately or store in the fridge for up to 2 days. If it's been sitting in the fridge, give it a good stir before serving!

Nutrition per Serving: Calories: 100 kcal | Total Fat 0g | Saturated Fat 3g | Carbohydrates: 7g | Protein: 17g | Sodium: 132mg | Potassium 256mg | Calcium 190mg Recipe source: joybauer.com

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