



Eat a Variety of Fruits & Vegetables Every Day

Fruit & Vegetable of the Month



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Vegetable of the Month: Cucumber



"Cool as a cucumber" isn't just a catchy phrase. The inner temperature of a cucumber can be up to 20 degrees cooler than the outside air. No wonder these are such a summertime favorite!

Cucumbers were believed to have originated in India and spread through Greece and Italy. They made their way into North America agriculture by the mid-16 century. Cool and moist due to their high water content. "Cukes" belong to the same family as pumpkins, zucchini, watermelon and other squashes.

Varieties

There are several varieties of cucumber; the most popular are English, Persian, and Pickling cucumbers. All these varieties are available year round.

Persian cucumbers are also known as regular cucumbers with soft, edible seeds. The skin is often waxed to seal in moisture.

English cucumbers are sometimes known as gourmet cucumbers, "burpless", or seedless cucumbers. This variety has seeds that are very small but do not need to be removed. Longer and thinner than regular cucumbers this variety is usually shrink-wrapped to seal in moisture because they are not waxed.

Selection

It's important to look for firm cucumbers with rich green color and no soft spots. Cucumbers that bulge in the middle, usually most likely means its filled with large watery seeds and tasteless flesh.

Storage

Whole cucumbers should be refrigerated in a crisper for up to a week. Unwaxed cucumbers will easily lose moisture so keep them

Cucumbers	
Serving size 1/2 cup, sliced with skin (52g)	
Amounts Per Serving	% Daily Value
Calories 10	
Calories from Fat 0	0
Total Fat 0g	0%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Sodium 0mg	0%
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Total Carbohydrate 2g	1%
Dietary Fiber 0g	0%
Sugars 1g	
Protein 0g	
Vitamin A	2%
Vitamin C	2%
Calcium	0%
Iron	0%
* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet.	

wrapped tightly in plastic.



Uses & Preparation

- Wash; removing seeds and peeling depends on the variety and is optional. To seed, slice in half lengthwise and scrape out with the tip of a teaspoon.
- Add a decorative touch to your veggie platter. Run tines of a fork down the entire length of the cucumber, penetrating the peel. Slice crosswise.

Recipes

Tomato, Cucumber and Red Onion Salad with Mint

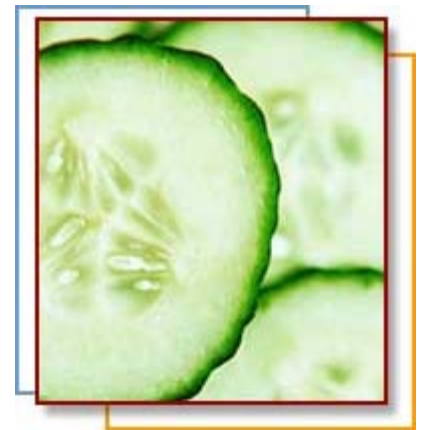
Serves 6

Each serving equals 3/4 cup of fruit or vegetables

Source: Unknown

Ingredients

- 2 large cucumbers - halved lengthwise, seeded and sliced
- 1/3 cup red wine vinegar
- 1 Tbsp white sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 3 large tomatoes, seeded and coarsely chopped
- 2/3 cup coarsely chopped red onion
- 1/2 cup chopped fresh mint leaves
- 3 Tbsps olive oil
- Salt and pepper to taste




In a large bowl, toss together the cucumbers, vinegar, sugar and salt. Let stand at room temperature for an hour, stirring occasionally.

Add tomatoes, onion, mint and oil to cucumbers and toss to blend. Season to taste with salt and pepper.



Nutritional analysis per serving: Calories 116, Fat 7.3g, Calories from Fat 11%, Protein 2.2g, Carbohydrates 12.4g, Cholesterol 0mg, Fiber 2.1g, Sodium 399mg.



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