

Health & Fitness

By, Danielle O. Murat

VEGETABLES – HATE ‘EM BUT GOTTA LOVE ‘EM

Cake. Chocolate fudge cake with a scoop of French vanilla ice cream drizzled with a sea salt caramel topping... Now that I have your attention, let's talk about vegetables. Wait don't go! Come back. This will be good I promise...

Vegetables – a divisive food group that many loathe but few truly understand the importance of. While vegetables can be boring I'm here to tell you that it's all about what you do with them.

The key is in how you cook them. A little spice and seasoning go a long way. You'd be surprised how far a good dose of herbs and spices can transform a plate of seemingly boring veg into a delicious, filling, and healthy meal.

The recommended daily serving of vegetables is about 2-3 cups. Yea I know the thought of chomping down 2-3 cups of kale, spinach, and other roughage has some of you fleeing for the junk food aisle, but fret not. I've provided you with some simple yet delicious recipes to help you incorporate more vegetables into your diet and get those daily servings in.

As always, feel free to tailor the recipes to cater to any food allergies you may have, but be sure not to skimp on the veggies you *can* consume. If you do, you're only cheating yourself. Besides, your skin will thank you for them. 😊

(For more on the benefits of vegetables (and fruits) see “Eight Fruits and Vegetables Your Skin Will Thank You For”)

RECIPE OF THE DAY



CAULIFLOWER PUREE

1 Large Head of Cauliflower (washed, trimmed and cut into pieces)

½ - 1 tsp Garlic (about ½ to 1 clove)

1 tsp Dill (fresh or dried)

1 tsp Salt

Pepper to taste

1. Place cauliflower in a pot or steamer with about 2 inches water. Cover with lid and bring to a boil. Reduce heat and let simmer until tender (about 20-25 min, depending on desired consistency).
2. Remove cauliflower from pot with a slotted spoon, to drain water, and place in food processor or blender with 3-4 tbsp of steamed water from the pot, and pepper. Process until cauliflower reaches a smooth consistency.
3. Taste and adjust seasoning to your liking with salt and pepper. Add fresh dill and process until herbs are evenly combined.

Serves 4

* This recipe is Vegan friendly ☺

EIGHT FRUITS AND VEGETABLES YOUR SKIN WILL THANK YOU FOR

A bi-product of increasing your intake of fruits and vegetables is the improved benefits to your skin. These eight fruits and vegetables will not only help you along your weight loss goals by incorporating healthy options into your diet, but will give your skin an added boost!

Kiwi

This little fruit packs a punch of Vitamin C, which stimulates collagen synthesis, helping to smooth fine lines, keeping skin taught and wrinkles at bay.

Yellow Peppers

The anti-oxidants in this crisp and slightly sweet pepper fight aging free radicals, helping to reduce wrinkles, especially crow's feet.

Tomatoes

The vitamins and minerals in this oft mistaken vegetable (it's a fruit!) provide many health benefits for your skin and body overall. The anti-oxidant lycopene improves skin's natural SPF.

Kale

This leafy green is a great source of zeaxanthin and lutein. One cup provides your daily value of skin-firming vitamin A and C and neutralizes the free radicals created by UV light.

Orange Peel

Limonene, a compound found in this zesty peel offers UV-protective benefits, protecting skin from the sun and harsh free radicals.

Pumpkin

This seasonal staple is a great source of beta-carotene, which the body processes into Vitamin A, aiding in the growth of skin cells, keeping skin smooth, soft and free of wrinkles.

Carrot

Another great source of beta-carotene, the yellow tones provide the skin with a natural glow, giving your complexion a healthier more radiant look.

Chickpeas

Also known as garbanzo beans, rich in protein and fiber, and low on the glycemic index, these beans can help reduce red spots and skin inflammation.

USER QUESTIONS/COMMENTS

USER POST: Please Kick Me! (Taken from “Learn” tab in Applause App ©12 Labs)

My goal is to lose 40lbs before June 2012 (my brother’s wedding!). I’m a fitfrnd super user, the fitfrnd ladies are so active I feel super jealous when I see users go for Zumba, Circuit Training, Walks, etc., etc.

Despite all that I am unable to make myself get out of the house. Every day I have a new plan. I’ll do this today and that tomorrow and will start as soon as I get home. But procrastination kicks in as soon as I’m home... and all I want to do is just sit and play with my adorable little baby. My son is 5 months old, has 2 little teeth and has been trying to sit up... I on the other hand have not lost any weight. Talk about progress! I want to fit in my wedding dress by June... aaaaaaa how will I ever be able to do that?

My friends try motivating me, fitfrnd users are amazing and keep offering suggestions... but can someone push me... kick me out of the house...

Please Kick Me!

ADVICE

Dear “Please Kick Me”,

Here you’ll find nothing but positivity, a healthy dose of reality, and more importantly support! So, there’ll be no figurative kicking involved. I’m here to guide you to the only person that can truly enforce action on your goal – YOU!

YOU have to want it bad enough. YOU need to get yourself off the couch, so YOU can get your body moving and burn the fat that YOU want to lose. See the trend here? It’s all about YOU making the changes YOU want to see. No one can do that for you. Encouragement is great, and we all need it at one point or another, but it works best when enforcing an active choice.

Now before you get down on yourself for not being able to set your goal in motion, I ask you to leave shame where it belongs – outside on the curb with the trash. This isn’t about self-blame or deprecation. It’s about taking charge of your ability to make the changes you want for yourself.

This may seem like an overwhelming task right now, but it’s doable. I know this because you’re here and you’re asking for help, so that in and of itself is a step in the right direction.

The question is how bad do you want it? And more importantly *why* do you want it? The “why” of our desires govern whether or not we initiate and stick to our goals. With a compelling enough reason you’ll be moved to execute whatever change you want for yourself.

That said, sometimes we just need a new perspective to get to our “why”, so as one of your cheerleaders and supporters I’ll ask you a few questions and offer you a few suggestions to get your wheels turning and get you moving closer to your goal. 😊

First and foremost, let’s work on getting you a compelling enough “why” for your weight loss goal. Beyond fitting into a dress why do you want this?

Sit for a minute. Close your eyes, get quiet, and be still. What does losing this weight mean for you and your future? What does it mean if you don’t? What do you stand to gain by doing so? What do you stand to lose if you don’t? Once you get a strong grasp of your “why”, you can focus on implementing the “how”.

You mention your son in your post. It’s definitely an exciting and important time, bonding with your newborn and spending time with one another. How can you share this time with your son? Making time to exercise doesn’t mean you have to leave him behind. An easy way to start is by incorporating him into your workouts. For example, you can start by going on a simple walk and taking him along.

If taking classes are more your speed, what better motivation to get through a class than to know that once you get home you’ll get to spend time with him? Knowing that you’ve done something important for yourself, and thereby him in the process. Taking better care of you will undoubtedly lead to you having more energy, which will allow you to do even more with him as he gets older.

If you’re finding it hard to leave the house to work out once you’ve come home, try working out after work, before you get home. Or if you can, a morning work out might better suit your schedule.

The point is you have options. Time is created not had, and once you get clear on your why - a compelling life fueling why - you’ll find yourself jumping at the opportunity to not only figure out the “how”, but to follow through on it to reach your goal.

Set a goal and run towards it with full faith that you can achieve it. Commit and see how far it takes you. If you falter, start back up again and keep going. We all stumble sometimes, but the battle is won in getting back up.

Once you start and see the results you won’t be able to stop. You’ll be so proud and excited with your progress you’ll wonder why you ever doubted yourself in the first place.

So choose a stronger why. Your why will lead you to your goal faster and more efficiently than anything or anyone else can. And as always, we’re here to support you and encourage you. And for daring to make a change – we applaud you. 😊