

Awesome Avocado

A nutritional superstar

David Klein



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AVOCADOS. You either love 'em, or you avoid 'em. And if you belong to the latter group, you're missing out on a nutritional superstar. Avocados are bursting with nutrients—vitamins, A, C, E, H, K and B complex (including folic acid), plus the minerals magnesium, copper, iron, calcium, potassium and many other trace elements. They're full of enzymes and are 74 per cent water by weight. Avocados provide all of the essential amino acids (those that must be provided by our diet), with 18 amino acids in all, plus seven fatty acids, including omega-3 and omega-6. Avocado lovers who eat a healthful diet typically experience more lustrous hair, softer skin, more pliable nails, fewer joint problems, slimmer bellies, less body odour, improved mental function and enhanced libido.

Rich in protein and fats

Ripe avocado is one of the richest sources of easily digestible, non-toxic fats. This fruit also contains more protein than cow's milk—about two per cent per edible portion. The ripening action of the sun spurs its enzymes to “predigest” complex proteins into simple, easily digested amino acids. Ripe, raw, organically grown avocados are naturally pure and provide all we need to build the highest quality protein in our bodies.

Avocados are the perfect source of dietary fat. Most people who transition from the standard North American diet (SAD)—white bread and pasta,

red meat, pasteurized milk, processed cheese and junk foods—to plant-based fat sources including avocado, nuts and seeds don't miss animal foods because raw plant fat is completely satisfying and more nutritious. Approximately 63 per cent of the fat in avocados is monounsaturated, 20 per cent is polyunsaturated and 17 per cent is saturated. The American Diabetes Association recently called avocados “nutrition superstars,” and recommended them as part of a healthy eating plan for diabetics because they contain good monounsaturated fat that does not raise blood cholesterol.

How to Buy and Store

When buying, choose a firm avocado with rough skin and a greenish tint. It is ripe when the fruit yields to gentle pressure in the palm of your hand. Only buy a ripe avocado if you plan to use it right away.

Keep your weekly supply of avocados on your kitchen table or somewhere else in plain sight. When they are ripe, refrigerate the ones you are not ready to eat. Wrap ripe avocado in plastic or keep it in a plastic bag or container. If it is refrigerated for too long, some spoiling may result.

Avocado Entertaining

Party time? These quick avocado dishes make tasty and healthy additions to the buffet table.

The classic: Mix mashed or chopped avocado with chopped bell pepper, tomato, celery and lemon juice for guacamole or salsa.

Perfect finger food: Spread avo-butter (mashed avocado) on Essene (sprouted grain) bread, whole grain crackers and soft corn tortillas.

The dip: Serve pieces of celery, carrot, broccoli, bell pepper or baked corn chips with avocado halves or a bowl of avo-butter.

Very elegant: Slice avocado into spears or chunks, then insert onto toothpicks.

All rolled up: Place chopped veggies, sprouts, tomatoes and avocado chunks on lettuce, kale or cabbage leaves, then roll them up and slice them into bite-sized pieces.

Go lean

With all these fresh vitamins, organic minerals, active enzymes, soluble fibre, high water content and easily digestible fats and proteins, avocados can help transform any sluggish, overweight meat-eater into a slimmer person. Some of the leanest people I know eat the most avocados!

Cooked foods such as refined grain, meat or dairy products in the SAD diet are the real villains that can keep an avocado-eater from losing excess fat. Why? Because cooking progressively destroys fibre and nutrients. Cooked foods therefore are clogging, taking days to move through our system, and they are nutrient-poor and toxic, sending the body into a fat-storage crisis mode. Evidence from many sources clearly shows that cooked fatty and high-protein foods are the prime culprit in North America's high rate of cancer, as well as in colitis and Crohn's disease, among many other diseases. This is because heated fats contain free radicals that can cause cancer. Cooked proteins coagulate so that they cannot be absorbed, then they putrefy in the bowel. Cooked starches clog us up with sticky matter that becomes a breeding ground for bacteria.

One avocado per day typically gives us all the fat we need, and is about all we can digest per meal. A small avocado provides more usable protein than a huge steak because the body cannot readily utilize cooked meat protein. And, unlike animal meat, avocados are

Avocado Facts and Fallacies

Fallacy

1. It's a vegetable
2. It's high in cholesterol
3. It's high in fat and it's fattening.
4. Its saturated fat content is dangerous.
5. It is a tree-ripened fruit

Fact

- It's actually an oily berry—a fruit.
- It has no cholesterol. Only animal foods have cholesterol. By weight, avocados average 30 per cent easily digestible fatty acids and approximately 70 per cent water.
- It is the cooked starches, meat, dairy and processed sugar in people's diets that feed fat cells. Most active people who consume avocados as part of a high raw-food, vegetarian diet have no problem losing excess fat and staying lean.
- Only about 17 per cent of the edible portion of avocado is saturated fat, and unheated saturated fat from live plant foods is non-toxic.
- The avocado doesn't soften on the tree. After picking, it must be allowed to soften for four to 17 days depending on the variety, temperature and humidity.

fibre-rich and non-constipating, as well as free of antibiotics and hormones. Digestion time is also dramatically lower—avocado won't putrefy in your stomach like meat does. As for the environment, it takes about 220 gallons of water to produce a pound of avocado compared with 2,400 gallons of water per pound of beef.

Why not start a new eating plan with avocados in mind? Whether your goal is to eat more healthy foods or transition completely off meat and dairy, avocado can be the perfect way to satisfy both your taste buds and your body's needs. ■



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