Native to western Asia, the turnip has served as food for humans and their livestock for centuries. The turnip was a daily staple in Europe before potatoes were.

Since turnips are a cool-weather crop that’s easy to grow and store, they were considered a poor man’s food in Europe during the Middle Ages. Today turnips are harvested in the fall and winter months in Asia and Europe as well as the northern United States and Canada.

As a member of the cruciferous vegetable family, the turnip is considered a top veggie when it comes to disease-preventing phytochemicals. Studies have shown that these compounds help the body both ward off and detoxify cancer-causing substances. Turnips are also low in calories, a good source of calcium and iron, and high in vitamin C. In fact, turnip juice has twice the amount of vitamin C as orange juice.

Those with thyroid conditions should limit their intake of turnips since they contain substances called goitrogens, which can interfere with the functioning of the thyroid gland. For others, however, the turnip can be very healing.

According to traditional Asian medicine, eating turnips improves circulation of qi (energy) and is healthful for the blood. Nutritional researchers suggest that the turnip is an effective food for clearing mucus and treating bronchial disorders such as coughs, bronchitis, and asthma. Eating raw turnips is said to help disperse lung congestion.
**Iron deficiency!** The symptoms are easy to spot. Dark circles under the eyes. Pale skin. A lack of energy. It's most common among women, children, athletes and the elderly. And despite being the most widespread nutrient deficiency in the Western world, it's easily preventable.

Canada's most recommended choice is Floradix, an excellent source of iron in an easy to absorb liquid formula. So why let iron deficiency leave you feeling flat? Floradix has been providing safe, quality supplementation worldwide for over 60 years.

Trust Floradix – Canada's most recommended iron supplement

- A highly soluble iron compound with special iron-fed yeast
- Yeast-free Floravit—suitable for yeast or gluten free diets
- Gentle on the digestive tract
- Great tasting fruit juice & herb base
- Safe, useable dosage avoids excess iron
- Ideal for vegetarians & vegans
- No pesticide residue or harmful additives
- Easy-to-digest liquid solution

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**Choosing your turnip**

Turnips come in many shapes and sizes, but the most common varieties have creamy white skin with shades of purple, reddish pink, or green. If you choose yellow, chances are you're holding a rutabaga—a cousin to the turnip. While large turnips are impressive, the smaller the turnip, the sweeter the taste.

A good turnip will be smooth and heavy for its size. If it comes with greens attached, remove the greens before storing the turnip in a root cellar for up to four months or in the crisper compartment of the refrigerator for a couple of weeks. Store greens in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for up to three days.

**Tangy Turnips**

Makes 4 to 6 servings.

Adding some zip to this hearty fall vegetable makes a plain, traditional dish into a fresh and fancy favourite.

- 2 lbs (0.9 kg) turnips (approx. 4 small turnips)
- 1/4 tsp (1 mL) sea salt
- 1/2 cup (125 mL) orange juice
- 2 Tbsp (30 mL) unpasteurized honey
- 1/2 tsp (2.5 mL) freshly grated ginger
- 1/4 tsp (1 mL) organic orange zest
- 1 Tbsp (15 mL) organic butter

Remove turnip greens and set aside. Remove the crown of the turnip with a sharp knife. Peel turnips and cut into 1-inch (2.5-cm) cubes. Cook in a steamer with an inch of water in the pot until tender (approximately 40 minutes).

**Turnip Tips**

- Add cubes to soups
- Grate or shred raw for salads
- Mix with mashed potatoes
- Cook in roasting pan with main dish
- Add greens to soups, stews, and stir-fries
- Cut in strips and add to veggie and dip platters.
Drain turnips and mash with a potato masher or fork. Using a wire whisk beat in all remaining ingredients until well mixed.

Put turnip mixture into a glass baking dish and bake at 350 F (180 C) for 6 to 8 minutes. For special occasions, drizzle with honey and decorate with freshly cut orange sections before serving.

**Tender Turnip Greens**

Don't throw away those turnip greens! They are exceptionally rich in phytochemicals, vitamin A, and are also an excellent source of vitamins C and E—all powerful antioxidants.

Fill a large bowl with fresh, cool water and swish the greens around gently until they are free of sand and dirt. Remove greens, empty bowl, and repeat, just to be sure they’re clean. Pat greens dry with a clean kitchen towel. About 10 minutes before serving dinner, heat a tablespoon (15 mL) of butter in a small frying pan or wok. Sauté greens (add green onions or chives and minced garlic if desired) for about 5 minutes. For additional taste, nutrition, and presentation flair, sprinkle toasted sesame seeds on top.

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