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What Are Avocados Good For?

Dr. Mercola, August 6 2016

Bravo, Avocado!



Botanical name: Persea Americana

Spanish conquistadors had their own historian, Oviedo, who reported positively about avocados discovered in Mexico around 1519. But this interesting fruit has graced Central and South America for perhaps 10,000 years, according to the avocado-inspired drawings and artifacts found in early Aztec settlements. A judge from Santa Barbara took the first Mexican avocado trees to California in 1871. California now grows 90% of the U.S. avocado crop in more than 6,000 groves. To enjoy an avocado (also called an "alligator pear"), it first has to be prepared. A common chef's maneuver: cut around the long side of the fruit down to the seed with a large knife. Twist the top half off like a jar lid. Then firmly tap the knife blade on the center of the seed a few times until it sticks. Practice makes perfect. Twist the knife and voilà – it's out. Carefully score the avocado flesh without nicking the peel, and then scoop it out with a spoon.

Health Benefits of Avocado

When it comes to nutrition, avocados are in a class by themselves because of the unusually large number of benefits they offer - more than 20, last count. Loaded with fiber, one avocado contains 36% of the daily requirement of vitamin K, 30% of the folate, and 20% each of the daily requirements of pantothenic acid (vitamin B5, needed to break

down carbohydrates), vitamin B6, vitamin C, and potassium - more than twice the potassium of a banana. Vitamin E, niacin, and riboflavin levels deserve honorable mention. Eaten with other foods, your body is better able to absorb the nutrients, such as alpha- and beta-carotene and lutein. Avocado is one of the few fruits that will provide you with "good" fats. That means it can help keep your cholesterol levels already in the healthy range, and help lower your risk for heart disease. Avocados are one of the best fruits for your health.

Studies Done on Avocado

Loosely described, lipids, their derivatives, and related substances are fatty acids. Scientists discovered only 40 years ago or so that they're not just simple building blocks, but perform complex, cell-regulating tasks on a molecular level, like messaging hormones, for example. One study was undertaken to see if avocados might have more lipids than other fruits and vegetables, which, while rich in carotenoids, are lipid challenged, impeding nutrient absorption. Researchers found that adding avocados to salad and salsa (foods used in the study) can significantly enhance your body's ability to take up the benefits of carotenoids, due primarily to the lipids in the avocados.

Avocado Healthy Recipe: Crisp and Crunchy Green Salad

Ingredients:

- 1 head red- or green-leaf lettuce, or Romaine
- 1 whole avocado, chopped into chunks
- 1 cup of sunflower seed sprouts
- 1 medium tomato, chopped small
- 1 medium cucumber
- ¼ cup toasted pine nuts

Dressing:

- ¼ cup olive oil
- 1/8 cup balsamic vinegar
- 1 clove garlic, crushed
- 1 teaspoon Dijon mustard

Procedure:

Prepare the lettuce leaves and place in a large bowl. Cut up the remaining vegetables and add them to the salad. Toast the pine nuts in a dry skillet on medium heat for 4-5 minutes or until lightly browned. Whisk together the olive oil and vinegar, add the crushed garlic, pour over the salad and serve immediately. Makes 4 servings. From Healthy Recipes for Your Nutritional Type by Dr. Joseph Mercola

Avocado Fun Facts

Because ancient Aztecs considered avocados a fertility fruit, and the Mayans used them as an aphrodisiac, a stigma against the fruit carried clear through the 19th century. Growers finally launched a campaign to convince consumers they could eat avocados without compromising themselves.