

Blood Sugar, Green Leafy Vegetables, Healthy Gut Flora, and the Human Microbiome



Green leafy vegetables contain plenty of nutrients that help with blood sugar. But something that's getting a lot of attention lately is that greens help nourish the healthful bacteria in the human gut. This is an excellent benefit.

So first, let's explain a few things.

The bacteria in the human gut are also called "gut flora" or "gut microflora" and are an important part of the human microbiome. When this 21 Day Blood Sugar Challenge talks about the microbiome, we are referring to the microorganisms that are in a particular part of the human body.

Eating greens directly nourishes the health-promoting bacteria in the gut. Having a healthy microbiome promotes weight loss for those trying to lose weight. It also helps to tame cravings for the kinds of foods that disrupt blood sugar and wreak havoc on the best of intentions for healthful eating.

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Ideas for Increasing Healthy Gut Flora and Promoting Weight Loss

- 1. Eat some leafy greens with all meals, including breakfast.** This might be different than what you currently do, but this simple shift is powerful.
- 2. Add one more serving than you typically eat of leafy green vegetables to your main meal of the day, each day.** This gets you in the habit of eating more leafy green vegetables.
- 3. Be sure to start the day with a full glass of water, 8 – 12 ounces.** Staying well hydrated is important for lots of reasons. The water helps the healthy gut flora do its job.
- 4. If you don't really like leafy greens, don't give up.** This is a place to start if this is an issue for you. Add the greens as you cook any proteins for your meals. Example: add broccoli, kale, collard greens or spinach to any dish where you have proteins, like chicken, lentils, chickpeas or fish, for example. If you cook the proteins and greens at the same time, the veggies get some flavor from the proteins and might taste better to you. Since leafy greens usually need less time to cook than most proteins, you may want to add the greens towards the end of the cooking time for proteins. Stiffer veggies like collard greens may require more cooking time.
- 5. Eat fermented food each day. Ideas – pickles, kimchi, sauerkraut, kombucha, miso, yogurt.** These are fermented foods from cultures around the world. People eat these foods and enjoy the healthful benefits, including eating the fiber in these fermented foods. An extra special bonus is that these foods contain lots of healthful probiotics too. Probiotics are healthful bacteria that live in the gut.

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Research

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