Hello from the Wayne/Holmes County SNAP-Ed Team!

Did you know that the USDA recommends that people of all ages fill half of their plate with fruits and vegetables at each meal? Vegetables offer many benefits, as they have a high nutrient content. Today’s newsletter will be focusing on the health benefits of dark green vegetables.

All vegetables and 100% vegetable juices count as part of the vegetables group. This includes all fresh, frozen, canned or dried vegetables.

There are five subgroups of vegetables:
1. dark green vegetables
2. red and orange vegetables
3. starchy vegetables
4. beans and peas
5. other miscellaneous vegetables.

Dark green vegetables include arugula, bok choy, broccoli, collard greens, dark green leafy lettuce, endive, escarole, kale, mixed greens, mustard greens, romaine lettuce, spinach, Swiss chard, turnip greens, and watercress.

Dark green vegetables are rich in antioxidants, Vitamins A, C, E, and K, and fiber.

According to the USDA Agricultural Research Services, studies have shown that eating 2 to 3 servings of green leafy vegetables per week may lower the risk of stomach, breast, and skin cancer.

**Recommended Amounts of Dark Green Vegetables Per Week**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Amount</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Children</td>
<td>2 to 8 years</td>
<td>½ to 1 cup per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth</td>
<td>9 to 18 years</td>
<td>1-1/2 to 2 cups per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>19 to 50 years</td>
<td>1-1/2 to 2 cups per week</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adults</td>
<td>51+ years</td>
<td>1-1/2 cups per week</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Photo Credit: Couleur, and conger-design from Pixabay

Vitamin K provides a number of health benefits which include: protecting bones from osteoporosis and helping to prevent against inflammatory diseases.
If you have extra greens that you don’t want to go to waste, just freeze them. It’s simple. Follow these directions from OSU Extension’s Fact Sheet on Freezing Vegetables.

Wash and cut your fresh greens into ½-inch pieces. Then, you can blanch them for 2 minutes in boiling water, cool them quickly in an ice bath, and then freeze them into ice cube trays or other small containers.

https://ohioline.osu.edu/factsheet/HYG-5333

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**Spinach Dip**

*Servings 6 | Prep time 10 mins. | Total time 35 mins.*

**Equipment:** Large bowl, 8x8 square baking dish or pie plate  
**Utensils:** Measuring spoons and cups

**Ingredients**

- 1 10-ounce package frozen chopped spinach, thawed, with water squeezed out  
- 1 10-ounce can no salt added diced tomatoes with green chilis, undrained  
- 3/4 cup shredded reduced fat Mexican-blend cheese  
- 8 ounces reduced fat cream cheese, softened to room temperature  
- Cooking spray

**Instructions**

1. Before you begin, wash your hands, surfaces, and tops of cans.

2. Preheat oven to 400 degrees.

3. Combine spinach, tomatoes, cream cheese and shredded cheese in a large mixing bowl. Mix until smooth.

4. Spray a square baking dish or round pie plate with cooking spray and pour in spinach mixture.


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**Nutritional Information**

(Per Serving)

- **Calories:** 140  
- **Total Fat:** 0g  
- **Sodium:** 260mg  
- **Total Carbs:** 6g  
- **Protein:** 8g

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