

# Broccoli

Want to start eating more healthy foods but don't know quite know where to begin? Why not start by making one small change to your diet. Broccoli is an edible green plant in the cabbage family (family Brassicaceae, genus Brassica).

Broccoli is a vegetable that people tend to either love or hate but either way it has lots of wonderful qualities that make it a vegetable that shouldn't be overlooked. Including it in your diet a few times a week will reap health rewards for you, not to mention it's great for keeping hunger at bay. Below are some examples of just how broccoli can support and sustain your well-being. They're worth taking into consideration and will hopefully motivate you to reach for the broccoli next time you're in the supermarket.

## **Help Fight Cancerous Cells**

Broccoli contains a number of sulphur-based compounds which have been proven to help prevent cancerous tumours. These compounds can actually stop the growth of breast, prostate, thyroid and other cancer cells. In addition, this sulphur-containing compound, Sulforaphane, can eliminate and prevent the presence of the bacteria responsible for stomach ulcers, some of which are immune to antibiotics.

## **Good For Your Heart**

Diabetes, a far too common ailment these days, can increase the likelihood of developing cardiovascular disease, heart attacks and strokes by a shocking five times. The Sulforaphane in broccoli encourages the production of enzymes which protect the blood vessels of the heart. This is crucial in the prevention of heart related illnesses.

## **Reduces Cholesterol**

High cholesterol is a common health issue for a large portion of the population, in particular for those carrying extra weight. In brief, there are two types of cholesterol, Low Density Lipoprotein (LDL) or 'bad' cholesterol and High Density Lipoprotein (HDL) or 'good' cholesterol. Cholesterol is a fat like substance which is actually vital to good cell function throughout the body. However, too much LDL can stick to the walls of veins, causing them to become thin, which often leads to heart problems. HDL returns excess cholesterol to the liver to be excreted from the body, unless over-whelmed by excess LDL. Importantly, broccoli can decrease these elevated levels of LDL, thus curbing the risks to your health.

## **Helps Improve and Maintain Healthy Eyesight**

As we get older, our eye sight weakens naturally. Lutein, which gives broccoli its characteristic colour, protects the eye by filtering out harmful light. Thus, preserving the eye function and keeping this age-related deterioration at bay.

## **Contains Antioxidants**

Broccoli contains a multitude of antioxidants! These help cleanse the body of harmful substances which can cause colds, flu and other illnesses, including high blood pressure. It is also a great source of vitamins, A, C and K, to name a few, as well as a number of essential minerals such as potassium which is necessary for good heart function.

## **Full Of Calcium**

The rich supply of calcium in broccoli, coupled with the presence of vitamin K, keep bones strong and resistant to fractures. Incredibly, broccoli contains more calcium than most dairy products.