



Tiny Microgreens Packed With Nutrients

Microgreens Have Up to 40 Times More Vital Nutrients Than Mature Plants

Researchers found microgreens like **red cabbage, cilantro, and daikon radish contain up to 40 times higher levels of vital nutrients than their mature counterparts.**

Microgreens are young seedlings of edible vegetables and herbs harvested less than 14 days after germination. They are usually about 1-3 inches long and come in a rainbow of colors, which has made them popular in recent years as garnishes with chefs.

Although nutritional claims about microgreens abound on the Internet, this study is the first scientific evaluation of their nutritional content. Researchers say they were astonished by the results.

“The microgreens were four- to 40-fold more concentrated with nutrients than their mature counterparts,” says researcher Qin Wang, PhD, assistant professor at the University of Maryland in College Park. “When we first got the results we had to rush to double and triple check them.”

For example, red cabbage microgreens had 40 times more vitamin E and six times more vitamin C than mature red cabbage. Cilantro microgreens had three times more beta-carotene than mature cilantro.

Microgreens Pack Nutritional Punch

Researchers evaluated levels of four groups of vital nutrients, including vitamin K, vitamin C, vitamin E, lutein, and beta-carotene, in 25 different commercially grown microgreens. The results are published in the *Journal of Agricultural and Food Chemistry*.

Vitamin C, vitamin K, and vitamin E levels were highest among red cabbage, garnet amaranth, and green daikon radish microgreens.

Cilantro microgreens were richest in terms of lutein and beta-carotene.

“All of these nutrients are extremely important for skin, eyes, and fighting cancer and have all sorts of benefits associated with them,” says researcher Gene Lester, PhD, of the USDA.

Lester said he was surprised to find microgreens were superior in nutritional value than the mature plants.

“To find that the levels were not only detectable but in some cases 4-6 times more concentrated than in the leaves of a mature plant, I find that quite astonishing.”

Although more research is needed, Wang says there may be a good explanation for microgreens’ high nutrient content.

“Because microgreens are harvested right after germination, all the nutrients they need to grow are there,” says Wang. “If they are harvested at the right time they are very concentrated with nutrients, and the flavor and texture is also good.”

For adults, the recommended daily allowance for vitamin E is 15 milligrams of alpha-tocopherol, meaning that eating just a small amount of daikon radish microgreens would cover your daily requirement for this important antioxidant vitamin.

Recent studies have shown that diets high in glucosinolate-containing vegetables such as dietary brassicas (Daikon radish, broccoli, arugula, kale etc.) have been associated with lower risks of heart disease, diabetes, and cancer.

Source: www.webmd.com