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5 STEPS TO BETTER HEALTH

Step 2: Grab The Greens

TESS: Hi, I'm Tess Masters, The Blender Girl

KAREN: And I'm Karen Kipp, The Juice Goddess

Step 2 of the 5 Steps To Better Health is: Grab The Greens.

Most of us are not eating enough greens. If you've got indigestion, or you're feeling sluggish, or you get sick a lot, chances are you need to eat more greens.

TESS: Chlorophyll-rich foods like spinach, kale, chard, arugula, romaine, lettuce, collard greens, bok choy, sprouts, wheatgrass, and broccoli are absolutely loaded with vitamins, minerals, fiber, and antioxidants. So, leafy greens nourish and detoxify the body; they help boost immunity; they combat excessive inflammation; they promote healthy cells, blood, bones, skin, and teeth. They also act as prebiotics. Those are foods that encourage the proliferation of friendly bacteria, so they're fantastic for gut health.

So, they're pretty perfect foods.

And, they're absolutely loaded with the nutrients that our bodies have to have. So, our immune system, our gut health, and our digestion - all of the natural cleanse mechanisms of the body have to have mineral-rich oxygenated blood in order to work efficiently.

So, if you're not eating enough greens, you're actually not feeding your body the fuel it needs to work properly.

KAREN: So, here are some good ways to get some more greens into your diet because it's always a little bit of a challenge:

Eat more salads. You can shred up spinach and kale and put them into your soups and stews. Nobody will know it's there. Chiffonade and stir greens into guacamole and other dips and you won't even taste them.

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Of course, my favorite is juicing. You can use all of these greens to juice with. You always want to start with the milder ones like the parsley and the spinach, and then move onto the kale and the wheatgrass. Those are a little bit stronger. You can juice them a little bit of apple, a little bit of citrus and cucumber to ease up on the green taste.

TESS: And, another great way is with smoothies. A green smoothie a day is a fantastic strategy for good health. So, green smoothies, I think, are the tastiest way to mask the taste of leafy greens, and pack a ton into your diet in a really quick, delicious way.

For the purposes of green smoothies, we classify greens as mild, medium, or strong. If you've never had a green smoothie, ease into the experience, and start with the mild greens: spinach, radish greens, and romaine lettuce, and use your sweet fruits.

Then, once you're accustomed to the flavor, and you realize they're actually really delicious, then move into the medium greens: collard greens, chard, kale, beet greens. And, then slowly reduce the amount of sugar into some healthier smoothies.

And, then the strong greens are arugula and dandelion greens. With those, a little bit goes a long way. You want to start with about 1/8 cup, otherwise it really comes into the flavor profile.

KAREN: And, if you're concerned about oxalate toxicity here is our take on that: When the same greens are consumed in extremely large quantities over and over again, the oxalates and alkaloids can inhibit the absorption of minerals like calcium and iron. So, we recommend rotating your greens every day. So, for example, one day you could have spinach, another day kale, another day parsley. Then, you consume a variety instead of just spinach or kale every day.

The most oxalate-dense leafy greens are spinach, Swiss chard, beet greens, collards, and parsley. So, eat those in moderation. In addition to this, stay hydrated with water and include a variety of other fruits and vegetables as part of a balanced diet.

TESS: You can find a ton of delicious green smoothie recipes in The Blender Girl Smoothies app or book. And lots of really great recipes using a ton of greens at TheBlenderGirl.com.

And, check out our Step 3 video at TheDecadentDetox.com for more tips on how to get healthy, and stay healthy.