



Kale

Kale is a crisp, green, leafy and hearty vegetable with a hint of earthiness. It is a member of the mustard, or Brassicaceae, family, as are cabbage and Brussels sprouts. It is a healthful addition to a varied diet. It adds fibre and antioxidants. People can use it in numerous ways. The flavors and nutritional content can vary between types. Younger leaves and summer leaves tend to be less bitter and fibrous.

BENEFITS

Possible benefits include helping manage [blood pressure](#), boosting digestive health, and protecting against [cancer](#) and [type 2 diabetes](#).

Kale contains fiber, [antioxidants](#), [calcium](#), [vitamins C and K](#), iron, and a wide range of other nutrients that can help prevent various health problems. The table below shows the amount of each nutrient in a cup of boiled kale, weighing around [118 grams Trusted Source](#) (g), without added salt.

.Nutrient	Amount in 1 cup
Energy (calories)	42.5
Carbohydrate in grams (g)	6.3, including 1.4 g of sugar
Fiber (g)	4.7
Protein (g)	3.5
Calcium in milligrams (mg)	177
Iron (mg)	1.0
Magnesium (mg)	29.5
Phosphorus (mg)	49.6
Potassium (mg)	170
Sodium (mg)	18.9
Zinc (mg)	0.3
Copper (mcg)	0.8
Manganese (mg)	0.6
Selenium in micrograms (mcg)	1.1
Vitamin C (mg)	21

Folate (mcg DFE)	76.7	
Betaine (mg)	0.4	
Beta carotene (mcg)	2,040	
Lutein + zeaxanthin (mcg)	5,880	
Vitamin E (mg)	1.9	
Vitamin K (mcg)	494	
Vitamin A (mcg RAE)	172	

Serving suggestions

People can eat kale raw, or steam, braise, boil, or sauté it, or add it to soups and casseroles.

***Raw:** Scrunching the leaves briefly in the hands can make them easier to digest. Add to salads, sandwiches, wraps, or smoothies.*

***As a side dish:** Sauté fresh garlic and onions in olive oil until soft. Add kale and continue to sauté until desired tenderness. Alternatively, steam for 5 minutes, then drain and stir in a dash of soy sauce and tahini.*

***Kale chips:** Remove the ribs from the kale and toss in olive oil or lightly spray and sprinkle with a combination of cumin, curry powder, chili powder, roasted red pepper flakes or garlic powder. Bake at 275°F for 15-30 minutes to desired crispness.*

***Smoothies:** Add a handful of kale to any favorite smoothie. It will add nutrients without changing the flavor very much.*

How to Store Raw Kale

The key to storing fresh kale is keeping it dry, as excess moisture will speed up the spoiling process. To store a bunch of raw kale:

- 1. Don't wash the kale until you plan to use it. Again, you don't want to introduce any unneeded moisture to the greens.*
- 2. Line a zip-top storage bag with paper towels. Place about two cups of dry kale inside the bag, squeeze out any excess air, and secure the bag. Store in the crisper drawer of your fridge for five to seven days. The stems should face toward the back of the fridge, where the air is colder.*
- 3. If you'd rather use a hard-sided storage container, just place one paper towel on the bottom of the container and another on top of the kale.*

4. Rinse the kale thoroughly under (cool, but not cold) running water when you're ready to eat. Run it through a salad spinner, if you have one, or gently dry it with clean paper towels before preparing it.

How to Store Cooked Kale

Storing cooked kale is a slightly different story, but it's not hard. Just follow these simple steps:

1. Let cooked kale cool to room temperature.
2. Place the kale in a resealable storage bag or airtight container. Store in the fridge for about five days.
3. Eat the kale cold, microwave it in 10-second increments, or reheat it on the stove.

Have a lot of kale to use up before it goes bad? The freezer might be your best option. Frozen kale comes in handy for [smoothies](#), soups, stews, casseroles, and more. To blanch and freeze kale:

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. In the meantime, fill a large bowl with ice water.
2. Cook the kale in the boiling water for about two minutes, or until the leaves start to brighten in color.
3. Use a colander to drain the kale. Immediately transfer it to the ice water bath to stop the cooking, then drain again. Dry the kale thoroughly.
4. Once the kale is completely dry, spread it in a single layer on a baking sheet. Flash freeze for at least three hours or up to overnight.
5. Transfer the now-frozen kale to a freezer-safe bag labeled with the date. Freeze for up to six months.

How to Thaw Kale

There's usually no need to thaw frozen kale - just blend it with the rest of your smoothie ingredients, toss it into your soup or stew, or stir it into pasta sauce.

If you do want to thaw a lot of kale quickly, though, you can place the bag or bowl in a bowl of cool water to speed things up.