

Green Smoothies:

What are Green Smoothies and why should we have them?:



A Green Smoothie is a mixture of water, leafy greens and fruits. It is very green but tastes like fruit. The greens are thoroughly blended with water in a high speed blender such as a Vitamix for a short period to break down their cellulose structure. This unlocks valuable nutrients that most of us lack. We only use leafy greens & celery in smoothies because they combine well with fruits. We do not use root vegetables, broccoli, or cauliflower.

We need to have a variety of greens so we don't overdose on one food. Greens we can use include: wheat grass, lettuce, endive, kale, dandelion, silver-beet, english spinach, basil, mint and many "weeds" including malva, plantain, miners lettuce, lambsquarters etc. Most weeds are edible, to identify them check this site: <http://www.ppws.vt.edu/weedindex.htm>

Most of us don't consume anywhere near the optimum quantity of leafy greens in our diet. Children especially seem to miss out. Green smoothies are the most pleasant way to eat more greens. What percentage of greens should our diet contain? By comparing ourselves with one of our closest evolutionary cousins, the Chimpanzee, it has been estimated that we should be having about 40% greens, 50% fruit and 10% other which may include nuts, seeds and a small portion of animal products. The Chimps are known to eat some insects but we may prefer to be vegetarian or only have flesh foods or dairy occasionally.

To consume enough greens by having salads, we would need to do a lot of chewing and most people don't chew anywhere near enough. We should chew each mouthful about 40 times, so to get through a huge salad, we would take quite some time.

When we thoroughly chew greens, we rupture the cells in the foods and release valuable nutrients that may otherwise remain locked up in the leaf's cellulose structure. The other way to release these vital nutrients is to pulverise the greens in a high speed blender. You may ask if this results in oxidation of some of the nutrients. The answer is yes, but only to a small degree provided we don't over do it.

A high speed blender such as the Vitamix, breaks open the plant's cells very effectively, unlock-

ing nutrients that have proved to be very beneficial for all sorts of health problems. If we have sufficient greens in our diet, stomach acid levels can be restored which improves digestion - an important area for improving health.

The Vita-Mix Blender is a commercial quality blender and because we use it so much, its important to have a long lasting machine. It will grind linseed and powder dried foods such as, tomatoes, celery and other vegetables and also make purees and dips. This is the one appliance that is vital for the dedicated raw fooder.

There are cheaper blenders such as the Power Mill Blender and Lexsen Blender that sell for about half the price but they probably won't last as long.

Other domestic blenders can be used but they are usually nowhere near as effective in rupturing the cell walls. A juicer that juices leafy greens is an alternative - just add the juice to the fruit and blend in your domestic blender.

The benefits of Green Smoothies:

1. They are very nutritious. The ratio is 40% greens to 60% fruit.
2. They are easy to digest because most of the cells in the fruit and greens are ruptured, making nutrients readily available.
3. They are a complete food because they still have fibre, which is essential for capturing toxins and eliminating them.
4. They are very palatable as the fruit dominates the flavour, yet the greens balance out the sweetness of the fruit, adding a nice zest to it.
5. A molecule of chlorophyll closely resembles a molecule of human blood. Two - three cups of green smoothies daily will give us enough greens to nourish and alkalise our body.
6. They are easy to make and are far less time consuming than juicing.
7. They are loved by children of all ages as long as the quantity of greens is increased slowly. Start with 20% -30% greens. The green colour can be masked by adding berries to create a more appealing red smoothie.
8. They are very satisfying and are a great way to cut back on the consumption of oils and salt in the diet. Greens, and especially celery, supply organic sodium which balances the potassium in fruits. Our cells depend on the correct balance of sodium and potassium for effective nutrient exchange.

Green Smoothie Recipes:

Berry-banana-lettuce

1 cup of strawberries, blueberries or boysenberries
2 large bananas or 3 - 4 small bananas
½ lettuce
2 cups water

Apple-kale-lemon

4 green apples
5 leaves of kale
½ lemon juice
2 cups water

Pear-kale-mint

4 ripe pears
5 leaves of kale
½ bunch mint
2 cups water

Creamy smoothie

2 ripe mangoes, pears, persimmons or stone fruit
2 cups baby spinach (approx 100g)
3 large sticks celery
8 medium bananas
1 cup water or the water from a young coconut