ABOUT VEGETABLE MYTHS

Many people do not use vegetables to best advantage because they may be confused by a number of popular myths. For example:

Myth: Vegetables liquified in a blender are especially nutritious.
Fact: There is nothing in the vegetable juice that is not in the vegetable itself.

Myth: Vegetables should be eaten raw for maximum nutritional value.
Fact: Properly cooked vegetables lose only small amounts of most nutrients. Vegetables are cooked to soften the cellulose (fiber) so they are more easily digested, or to make them taste better.

Myth: The liquid in a canned vegetable should be discarded.
Fact: As much as one third of the soluble minerals and vitamins may be in the liquid, and lost when it is poured off. Put liquid in pan first, and cook down before adding vegetables.

Myth: Water should be changed three times in cooking greens.
Fact: Some minerals and vitamins dissolve in water. Therefore, the less water used in cooking greens the better. Throwing away cooking water is throwing away nutrients. It might be a good idea, however, to change water three times in washing greens, to remove soil and grit that clings to the leaves.

Myth: Most vegetables should be cooked in open pans.
Fact: Covering the pan makes it possible to cook the vegetable in less water, and in a shorter time.

Myth: Cabbage, onions, cucumbers and radishes are indigestible.
Fact: None of these is necessarily indigestible. People differ in their reaction to individual food items.

Myth: Vegetables grown with "organic" fertilizer are more nutritious than those grown with "chemical" fertilizer.
Fact: This claim has no scientific support. The nitrogen used by the plants is the same chemical, whether it comes from manure, or synthetic ammonia. Furthermore, the fertility of the soil affects the abundance and size of the vegetables, rather than their nutritional value.
Myth: Small, young carrots are higher in food value than larger carrots.
Fact: Large carrots usually have a deeper color, and their vitamin A content is higher than that of younger carrots. Food value increases as the carrot matures.

Myth: Fresh vegetables are always more nutritious than canned or frozen.
Fact: When vegetables are canned and frozen properly by modern scientific methods, they retain a very high proportion of the original nutrients. They are usually processed directly from the fields. Since fresh vegetables often lose nutrients through improper storage and preparation, processed ones may actually be more nutritious.

Myth: Tomatoes ripen well on a sunny window sill.
Fact: They will reach their best appearance and value kept at room temperature out of direct sun.

Myth: Dark outer leaves of lettuce should be discarded.
Fact: The outer leaves, although less tender, have more vitamins and minerals.

Myth: All fresh tomatoes have about the same vitamin C content.
Fact: Summer field ripened tomatoes have about twice the vitamin C as winter or greenhouse grown tomatoes.

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