



Why do I grow Kale in Kandy?

(Seeds bought from Bunnings, Sydney)

Kale: The Nutritional Powerhouse,
the verdant superhero of leafy greens!

Let me talk about the history of Kale.

In the '90s, Pizza Hut, the pizza chain, was the biggest purchaser of kale in the US, using it mainly for its appearance. However, kale's actual value as a nutritious leafy green was later discovered. It contains essential vitamins and minerals such as A, K, B6, and C, as well as calcium, potassium, copper, and manganese. It's as if kale transformed into a nutritional superhero and took center stage.

Let's delve into the nutritional benefits offered by kale.

Vitamin K: Just one cup of kale provides 68% of your daily vitamin K needs. Vitamin K is essential for blood clotting and bone health.

Vitamin C: Move over, oranges! Kale has about three times more vitamin C than spinach or collard greens. This water-soluble antioxidant is vital for collagen synthesis and immune function.

Manganese: Kale delivers 8% of your daily manganese dose.

Manganese is essential for bone health and antioxidant defence.

Fibre: Kale is a fibre champion, promoting gut health and preventing constipation.

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Calcium: Wait, isn't that for dairy? Nope! Kale's a decent dose of calcium, although it's not as bioavailable due to its oxalic acid content (more later).

Other Goodies: Riboflavin, vitamin B6, potassium, magnesium, and iron—all bundled up in those curly green leaves.

The Antinutrient Dilemma: Oxalic Acid

Now, let's talk about kale's dark secret: oxalic acid. It's like the villain lurking in the shadows. Oxalic acid interferes with calcium absorption, forming tiny, sharp crystals that can lead to kidney stones. But wait, there's more! These crystals might also cause vulvodynia in women (painful intercourse due to oxalic acid in the labia) and mess with cardiovascular health, joint function, and muscle contraction. Plus, some folks experience bloating after a kale feast.

There is a way to tame the Oxalic Beast.

Fear not! You can still enjoy kale without summoning the calcium-crystal demons:

Here's how:

Cook it: Heat breaks down oxalic acid, so lightly steam or sauté your kale.

Pair it right: Consume kale with calcium-rich foods (dairy or fortified plant-based milk) to enhance calcium absorption.

Variety matters: Don't consume only kale all the time. Mix it up with other greens to balance nutrients.

Discover the Health Benefits of Kale

Heart Health: Kale's compounds may lower cholesterol and reduce heart disease risk.

Digestive Hero: That fibre? It's your gut's best friend.

Skin Glow: Vitamins A and C team up for radiant skin.

Anti-Inflammatory: Kale's antioxidants fight inflammation like caped crusaders.

So, there you have it—the kale saga! Remember, moderation is key. Kale salads, smoothies, or even kale chips—embrace the green goodness but keep those calcium crystals in check.

Sources:

Ask Dr. Nandi

Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health



Let's explore some delightful ways to cook this nutrient

Boiling Kale:

Bring 2 cups of water and a pinch of salt to a boil in a large saucepan.

Add 12 ounces of torn kale (roughly 12 cups torn or about four servings).

Return to boiling, then reduce the heat and simmer for 20 to 25 minutes or until the kale is tender.

Drain and voilà! Tender, comforting kale is ready to grace your plate.

Sautéing Kale:

Heat a large skillet (bonus points if it's your favourite one—kale vibes love good cookware).

Add four teaspoons of olive oil (extra-virgin, if you feel fancy).

Toss in your kale—chopped, torn, or however you prefer it.

Sauté it up! A few minutes should do the trick. You want it vibrant and slightly wilted.

Optional flavour boosters: Garlic (because garlic makes everything better) and a squeeze of lemon juice (for that zesty kick).

Slow-Simmered Kale:

Imagine kale taking a leisurely spa day. That's what slow-simmering does.

Grab some stock or other cooking liquid (broth, anyone?).

Let your kale luxuriate in it for 25 to 35 minutes until it becomes beautifully tender and sweet.

It's like kale whispering, "I'm ready for my close-up."

Kale Chips (Because Why Not?):

Preheat your oven to around 350°F (175°C).

Tear your kale into chip-sized pieces (think mini frisbees).

Drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle with salt, and maybe a pinch of paprika or nutritional yeast for extra pizzazz.

Bake for about 10-15 minutes until crispy but not burnt. Watch them closely—they can go from "crispy chic" to "charred disaster" in seconds.

Remember, kale is like a versatile canvas waiting for your culinary brushstrokes. Pair it with roasted sweet potatoes, toss it into grain bowls, or sneak it into your morning omelette. The options are as endless as a kale field under a sunny sky.

Sources:

Better Homes & Gardens

Taste of Home

Great British Chefs

The Spruce Eats

The Kitchen

Kale Stir-fry with Garlic and chilli/ஆன Kale பொரியல் super-ஆன taste-ல்/Healthy Kale recipe

<https://youtu.be/GIYUbkJ3aRE>

