

SPOTLIGHT ON SUMMER FOODS

TAKE "STALK" AND BE AS COOL AS A CUCUMBER

The scorching summer heat can have us reaching for iced beverages, sugary popsicles, and calorie-loaded ice cream. Hydrating foods can be a better and healthier way to cool off from the inside out! Did you know that we can get 20% to 30% of our hydration needs from food alone? Cucumber and celery can be added to your summer diet to cool you off and improve your health!

CUCUMBER

- ✓ Made up of 96% water, cucumbers can help meet your daily fluid requirements.
- ✓ High in antioxidants that may reduce the chances of various chronic diseases.
- ✓ Its high water and fibre content, and low caloric density make the cucumber great for weight loss and promoting regularity.
- ✓ May help lower blood sugar and be useful in diabetes prevention.
- ✓ Provides 2 grams of protein in an 11-ounce serving.
- ✓ Cucumber seeds are a good source of minerals and contain calcium.
- ✓ Cucurbitacin, found in cucumber, has been shown to inhibit the growth of pancreatic cancer cells.

FUN FACT: Place a slice of cucumber on the roof of your mouth for 30 seconds to fight bad breath!

CELERY

- ✓ The fibre in celery helps to curb cravings and aids in weight loss.
- ✓ Celery seeds and juice are a natural diuretic helping to reduce bloating and edema.
- ✓ A good source of folate and potassium, which helps to lower blood pressure.
- ✓ May help to protect from gastric cancer and ulcers.
- ✓ Enzymes in celery aid in digestion.
- ✓ High in calcium, which helps to strengthen bones.
- ✓ A notable source of vitamin K, which is good for blood clotting. Eating 6 stalks will provide 100% of your recommended daily intake.

FUN FACT: The Ancient Greeks regarded celery so highly that they would present wreaths of celery to athletes who won a competition.

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TURN DOWN THE HEAT!

There's a reason why the crispness of celery and the cooling taste of cucumber is appealing during the summer months. Listen to your body! It knows what it needs. Here are some easy and delicious ways to turn down the heat.

Easy Cucumber Cups

You'll be super cool with this awesome appetizer!

- 2 large English cucumbers, cut into 1-inch rounds
- 1 cup homemade or prepared hummus (red pepper adds colour)
- 1/2 cup jarred sundried tomatoes, pretzels, peppers, or garnish of choice

Directions: To create cups, scoop out the centre of the cucumber slices, but be careful not to cut all the way through.

Use a piping bag and fill the cucumber cups with hummus.

Arrange on a platter and top each with a slice of sundried tomato or roasted red pepper. Serve immediately and enjoy!



Nutrition Per Serving (2): Cal: 43 | Fat: 2.1g | Protein: 2.2g | Sodium: 126mg | Carbohydrate: 4.7g | Fibre: 1.8g | Sugar 1.1g

Adapted from: <https://www.reneeskitchenadventures.com/2016/06/easy-cucumber-hummus-cups.html>



Cooling Celery Juice

A refreshing drink for a hot summer day with some great health benefits. Good for gut health, sugar cravings, bloat, water retention, and more!

- 3 cups of fresh celery
- 1/2 to 1 cup coconut water
- 1-inch cube of ginger or a twist of lemon (optional)

Directions: Add ice if you prefer and blend until smooth.

Serve immediately and enjoy! Makes 2 servings.



Nutrition Per Serving: Cal: 36 | Fat: 0.4g | Protein: 1.5g | Sodium: 184mg | Carbohydrate: 6.7g | Fibre: 3.1g | Sugar 3.6g

Adapted from: <https://www.peacefuldumpling.com/celery-juice-recipe>



Sources: <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/7-health-benefits-of-cucumber#section2>
<https://draxe.com/nutrition/benefits-of-celery/>
<https://www.naturalmedicinejournal.com/journal/2013-04/pilot-study-evaluate-antihypertensive-effect-celery-extract-mild-moderate>
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