

# CUCUMBERS



Cucumbers are in season from July through September.

## Tips for selecting cucumbers

Common cucumber varieties include English, gherkin, kirby, and ridged. Choose well-formed, uniform cucumbers with an even dark green color. Cucumbers should be firm with no soft spots. A yellow color or large size indicates lower quality.

## Storage

After two to three days at room temperature, refrigerate in a plastic bag for up to one week. Cut or peeled cucumbers must be refrigerated.

## Preparation

Rinse with cold water and slice. For large wedges, peel off the skin, cut lengthwise, quarter, and skim off the seeds. Cucumbers can be used in salads, sandwiches, vegetable platters, or pureed and used in a vegetable dip.

## To cook

Cut into wedges and remove the seeds. Simmer for a few minutes, or until tender. Drain, return to the pan, and season.

## Key nutrients

- Fiber to prevent constipation
- Potassium to maintain normal blood pressure

## Recipes

### Cucumber and tomato salad

- 1 large tomato
  - 1 cucumber
  - 1 small onion
  - 1 tablespoon fresh dill
  - 2 green chile peppers, chopped
  - 1 tablespoon vinegar
  - 1 tablespoon oil
  - 1 tablespoon lemon juice
  - Salt
- Cut tomato into 10 wedges. Peel cucumber then cut it in half lengthwise and then into thin slices. Cut onion in half lengthwise and then slice it paper thin. Put onion slices into a bowl, sprinkle with salt, and mix well. Pat onions dry with paper towel. On a platter, arrange in succession a row of tomatoes, cucumber slices, and onion pieces. Sprinkle with dill, salt, and chile peppers. Mix vinegar, oil, and lemon juice and pour enough into the salad to moisten it well. Serves 6; 40 Cal; 2.5 g fat.

### Cucumber and yogurt dip

- 1½ cups plain low fat yogurt
  - ½ cup sour cream
  - 2 large garlic cloves, minced
  - 2 medium cucumbers, peeled, grated, and squeezed dry in paper towels
  - 2 tablespoons fresh mint, chopped
  - 1 tablespoon fresh cilantro, chopped
  - 1½ teaspoons olive oil
- In a serving bowl, combine yogurt, sour cream, garlic, cucumbers, mint, cilantro, and oil. Cover and refrigerate 6 to 8 hours. Serves 10; 55 Cal; 3 g fat.



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