

Here Are Some Added Health Benefits in Fermented Foods

Fermented foods have been a food choice for centuries. The practice is defined as a transformation of a substance (organic food) caused by bacteria, yeasts, molds, and other microorganisms.

Complex organic catalysts and enzymes trigger a chemical response in the organic substance(s). In early history, this transformation was considered an act of the Divine.

Since the Neolithic Era, people have fermented foods, and one of the earliest references to the practice occurred in the Jiahu village in China, where honey, rice, and beverages were made via fermentation. Wine was made in ancient Babylon and Egypt as well as pre-Hispanic Mexico and the Sudan.

Some of the earliest foods and beverages that underwent the fermentation process include cheese, bread, wine and beer.

Researchers suggest that the process of fermentation was most likely stumbled upon when people started using salt in food. The accidental discovery of salt's preservative power later led to the ancient Chinese to begin inoculating foods with enzyme creating molds.

In more modern times, the fermentation process is also used to make vitamins, antibiotics, and both gluconic and citric acid, in addition to its continued use on the preservation and transformation of foods and beverages.

Fundamental Benefits

One of the most basic and fundamental benefits found in fermented foods is that the food is preserved longer than fresh food. The flavor of the preserved foods is intensified,

and you can ferment foods for relatively little expense. Fermenting foods increases the bioavailability of the nutrients in the food. Thus, you derive greater levels of nutrients in an easily digestible form, all the while increasing the number of good bacteria consumed.

When foods are going through the fermentation process, the bacteria predigest some of the food, break down cellular walls in veggies, and make the nutrients and vitamins easy to absorb. This is true of carrots, beets, collard greens, peas, kelp, kale, parsley, broccoli, and spinach as well as other fermented vegetables.

Fermented Foods & Gastrointestinal Health

There's evidence the consumption of foods that have been fermented eases digestion and simultaneously improves absorption.

Our bodies are exposed to a multitude of factors that throw off the inner balance of the bacteria in the gut. When this happens, it can affect your ability to absorb foods properly, and it can also lead to illness and the weakening of immune system functioning. Some of the factors that cause bacterial imbalance in the gut include the use of antibiotics, excessive sugar consumption, excessive carbohydrate consumption, too many processed foods in the diet, and psychological stress.

Consuming fermented foods helps in restoring the balance of good versus harmful gut bacteria. A number of health conditions are linked to an imbalance of gut bacteria, including conditions like asthma, Irritable Bowel Syndrome, constipation, Candidiasis (area and systemic yeast infections), and gluten and lactose intolerance.

The Health Benefits of Fermented Vegetables

When you ferment vegetables, you are able to easily digest and absorb vitamins, minerals, phytonutrients, antioxidants, and

enzymes in the food. For instance, when fermenting beets, you increase the nutrient density in beets especially Vitamin C.

Pickled beets are also an outstanding source of magnesium, Vitamin A, Potassium, fiber, and low in fat. Meanwhile, carrots have no saturated fat, no cholesterol and offer 60 percent the daily allowance of vitamin A after fermentation.

The vegetable is rich in carotenoids, as is parsley, with the latter having two times the carotenoids that carrots contain.

Another vegetable rich in carotenoids is broccoli. Carotenoids are antioxidant-rich phytochemicals; some research suggests that carotenoids may help diminish the risk of developing certain types of cancer and may even offer some protection against macular degeneration. According to the United States Department of Agriculture, spinach has similar benefits; it is another fermentable vegetable featuring carotenoids as well as the flavones Apigenin and Luteolin. Apigenin is a natural cancer defense, while Luteolin also has cancer-fighting properties, anti-inflammatory properties, and anti-viral effects.

Essentially, the health benefits of fermented vegetables are well documented. Looking at the benefits of consuming fermented vegetables reveal that fermented selections are a healthier alternative. Bear in mind the decision to eat fermented or regular foods shouldn't be an all or nothing choice.

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