**Cucumbers**

*Cucumis sativae*

**Nutrition Facts:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Serving Size</th>
<th>Calories</th>
<th>Proteins (g)</th>
<th>Carbohydrates (g)</th>
<th>Fiber (g)</th>
<th>Fat (g)</th>
<th>Vitamin A (I.U.)</th>
<th>Potassium (mg)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>½ c raw</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>112</td>
<td>75</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Cucumbers are not a good source of vitamins or nutrients but they do contain lutein, a carotenoid that is essential in eye health.

Cucumbers are available from July through September.

Cucumbers are native to India and records indicate it may be one of the oldest cultivated vegetables. Cucumbers belong to the group of vegetables known as cucurbits which includes other vine crops such as melons, pumpkins, and squash.

There are two basic types of cucumbers — those eaten fresh and those that are pickled. Slicing, or fresh cucumbers are 6-9 inches long and have a dark green, glossy skin. Pickling cucumbers are smaller than slicers. Gherkins are particularly small, warty pickling cucumbers.

**What to Look for When Purchasing**

Look for cucumbers that are firm and rounded and aren’t shriveled near the ends. Slender cucumbers typically have fewer seeds and those that bulge in the middle are likely filled with large seeds. The skin should be bright green and not yellow.

**Storage Tips**

Store uncut and unwashed in the vegetable crisper in your refrigerator. Wax cucumbers will store well for up to a week. Cut cucumbers should be wrapped in plastic and used within 2 days.

**Cooking Tips**

Most cucumbers are eaten fresh and not cooked. You don’t need to peel cucumbers prior to eating them.

**Uses**

- Combined with scallions and a yogurt/herb dip
- Sliced or diced on salads
- Refrigerator pickle
- Chilled cucumber soup or gazpacho with tomatoes, red onions, roasted green peppers and wine vinegar
- Slaw with apple, and toasted walnuts dressed with a lemon vinaigrette

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