

Ползите за здравето от консумирането на зелени подправки

Author(s): Растителна защита
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Green herbs – parsley, celery, dill and basil are low in calories, fat-free and low in sodium, which makes them an excellent aid in diets and in maintaining a healthy eating regimen.

Parsley is one of the most commonly used herbs. Its centre of domestication is considered to be the Mediterranean. It has been known to humankind for more than two millennia. For the ancient Greeks it was a sacred plant. At that time it was used mainly as a medicinal plant. The ancient Romans used it to treat kidney diseases. It was only in the Middle Ages that it began to be used as a culinary herb. Parsley contains more vitamin C than oranges. The required daily dose for a person is contained in 20–30 g of the plant. It is a source of flavonoids and antioxidants – luteolin, apigenin, folic acid, vitamins B1, B2, K, A, PP. It also contains iron,

potassium, calcium, phosphorus, zinc, alpha- and beta-carotene, lutein and zeaxanthin. Other important compounds in its composition are apiin, chrysoeriol and essential oils containing limonene, myristicin, eugenol and alpha-thujone. Myristicin protects the body from the action of free radicals. The essential oils neutralise agents that cause cancer, such as benzo(a)pyrenes contained in cigarette smoke. All this ranks parsley among the group of superfoods that protect against cancer. Thanks to folic acid, the herb slows down cell division, which causes certain types of cancer. It has therapeutic properties for the kidneys and gallbladder, supports the function of the heart and the circulatory system. It is recommended in cases of anaemia. It lowers blood pressure and improves lipid metabolism. Parsley has a strong anti-inflammatory effect and is used for the treatment of rheumatoid arthritis and osteoarthritis, various infections and colds. It removes toxins and cleanses the blood vessels, joints and liver, significantly boosting immunity.



Celery

The species has been cultivated from wild celery. Like parsley, it originates from the Mediterranean region of Southern Europe and North Africa, as well as from areas east of the Himalayas. The ancient Greeks used it as a medicine and for making laurel wreaths for athletes. Later its use as food began. In Europe it has been popular as food and seasoning since the 18th century. Celery is a source of vitamin C, fibre, potassium, molybdenum, manganese and vitamin B6. It has an exceptionally high content of vitamin A, and its stalks are a rich source of B-group vitamins – B1, B2, B6, folic acid, calcium, magnesium, iron, phosphorus, sodium and essential amino

acids. It contains a whole palette of beneficial nutrients. Celery helps to lower blood pressure. The valuable minerals in its juice neutralise acidity in the body and normalise pH. It is known for its beneficial effects in the fight against cancer cells – it stops their growth. It is a powerful antioxidant and fights free radicals by suppressing the growth and nourishment of malignant cells. Celery juice has been proven effective in reducing blood cholesterol levels.



Dill comes from Southern Russia, Western Africa and the Mediterranean region, but it is also mentioned in the Bible and in ancient Egyptian papyri. The ancient Romans gave dill to gladiators to make them enduring and strong. In Ancient Babylon the herb was grown for medicinal purposes, and Hippocrates was familiar with the healing properties of dill and used it in a recipe for disinfecting the mouth. Dill has a high content of vitamins C, B1, B2, E, PP, P, carotene (provitamin A) and mineral salts of potassium, calcium, phosphorus and iron, as well as folic acid (vitamin B9). Dill oil contains carvone, d-limonene, α -phellandrene, carveol, dihydrocarvone, α -terpinene, dihydrocarveol, dillapiol, α -pinene, dipentene, isoeugenol. Dill has a high content of monoterpenes and flavonoids, which are known for their protective properties against free radicals and carcinogens. According to research, monoterpenes activate the secretion of the enzyme glutathione S-transferase, which is effective in neutralising carcinogens. Dill has an antioxidant effect. It is used in cases of chronic vascular insufficiency and as a prophylactic agent against angina pectoris attacks. It has been proven to strengthen blood vessels and

reduce high blood pressure. The high content of ascorbic acid and iron salts in dill makes it indispensable in therapeutic nutrition for patients with anaemia.



Basil

The homeland of basil is the tropics of Asia and Africa. In Europe it has been cultivated for centuries. It is a source of vitamin C, iron, calcium, magnesium and potassium, which is why it is advisable to consume it fresh in dishes, salads, purées, juices or smoothies, in combination with other vegetables and fruits. Basil has antiseptic, antispasmodic, analgesic, anti-inflammatory and mildly stimulating effects. It is used in infectious and inflammatory conditions of the genitourinary and respiratory tracts, in cases of fatigue and depression. Taken in large doses, it is toxic. Externally it is used as a poultice for skin rashes and oedemas. According to Bulgarian folk medicine, juice from fresh basil leaves is used in purulent inflammations of the middle ear, as well as in hard-to-heal wounds.