

The York University Staff Association Health & Wellness News & Views

Water Works! In our eat-and-run, massive-portion-sized culture, maintaining a healthy weight can be tough—and losing weight, even tougher. Contributing to the difficulty is the amount of fad diets and “quick-fix” programs that tempt and confuse us, and that ultimately fail. Your weight is a balancing act, but the equation is simple: If you consume more calories than you burn then you gain weight. If you consume less calories than you burn, you lose weight. (Yaya, I know I sound like a broken record) We make weight loss much more difficult than it needs to be with unhealthy diets that leave us irritable and starving. Not a good combination. But there is a better way! You can lose weight without feeling miserable. Ever hear that “eating” water can help you lose weight? It can if you eat foods that contain a lot of water. Research has proven that the water in these foods fills you up so you eat less. Foods high in water and fiber are the so-called “high-volume foods”. They add bulk to your meals and help fill your stomach. Make this strategy work for you by adding more of these water packed fruits and veggies to your daily meals.

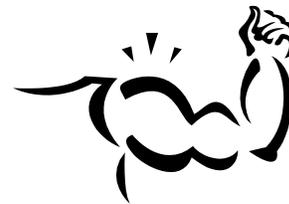
Full of water and rich in antioxidants like vitamin C, **cabbage** is an incredible immune booster. Cabbage is also a very good source of vitamin K. Vitamin-K plays a potential role in bone strength. Research has shown that getting enough vitamin K in your diet not only gives you healthy bones, but in addition, vitamin-K also plays a role in curing Alzheimer's disease patients by limiting neural damage in their brain. Common with several vegetables, cabbage is one of those foods which retains more nutrients the less you cook it. When adding cabbage to your cooking, try putting this vegetable in at the very end to prevent overcooking it and reducing its nutritional value. Enjoy it lightly sautéed in a stir-fry or pair it with some sweet-tart pickled beets.

There is a lot more juice in **grapefruit** that meets the eye. A powerhouse for heart health, grapefruit makes a perfect breakfast since it comes in a ready-made bowl. Grapefruit is an excellent source of vitamin C. It helps to lower cholesterol levels, and the seeds have antioxidant properties. Grapefruit is rich in nutrients like potassium, folate, thiamin, vitamin A, vitamin B6 and fiber. It is an anti-cancer agent that helps to fight against diseases. To get the juiciest, select fruits that are heavy for their size. Fun fact- Grapefruit gets its name from the way it grows. Grapefruits grow on tree branches in grape-like clusters.

Packed with water and just 60-70 calories per pound, **lettuce** tops the list of diet friendly foods. Lettuce aids in digestion and promotes liver health. It can also reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke and cataracts. Other research shows that it helps to reduce the risk for cancer and may even ease insomnia. As a rule, the darker green the leaves the more nutritious. Toss your lettuce of choice with a zesty homemade Italian vinaigrette, or use it in a hearty layered cob salad. Yummo!

Considering how small they are, **radishes** have quite a high vitamin count. These brightly coloured vegetables are packed with potassium, folic acid, and antioxidants. The biggest benefit of radishes is how filling they are, which can help you lose weight by satisfying hunger with very few calories. Factor in the high water content and carbohydrates and radishes can help keep weight loss under control with little effort. Thinly slice these red beauties and toss in a fresh green salad or julienne for a crispy coleslaw. And don't forget the leafy green tops, which contain six times the vitamin C and even more calcium than the radishes themselves.

Besides being refreshingly delicious and low in calories watermelon contains about 90% yes - water, and it is an excellent source of Vitamin C, which is a major antioxidant and has a high beta carotene concentration, thus offering a good amount of vitamin A as well. Most of us don't think to eat the seeds, or opt for the seedless variety when available, and that's actually kind of a shame. Watermelon seeds are a rich source of protein and have their own beneficial phytonutrients, a substance found in certain plants which is believed to be beneficial to human health and help prevent various diseases. While seedless watermelons may be more convenient keep in mind that they can't reproduce without human intervention, another excellent reason to choose the natural seeded variety. Especially tasty on a hot summers day indulge in a great tasting, refreshing, and healthy treat with watermelon whenever you desire.



We all know the popular cartoon character Popeye and his love of **spinach**. Why did he love this green leaf so much? Spinach is a powerplant of vitamins, minerals and antioxidants. It is a rich source of iron, vitamins C, A, potassium and magnesium. As well as being packed with nutrients, spinach is extremely low in calories. Spinach is available fresh, frozen, and of course how Popeye enjoyed it - from a can. Spinach can be added raw to a salad or sautéed with a bit of olive for a healthy side dish. However you eat spinach, you will know you are doing something good for your health.

The bottom line - Fruits and vegetables contain large quantities of water in proportion to their weight. They pack a lot of nutrition into a minimum of calories. Remember, it's just as important to eat water-rich foods as it is to drink water if you want to lose or maintain a healthy weight.