

What Are Sprouts Good For?

(from <https://foodfacts.mercola.com/sprouts.html>)

November 08, 2016



You may have seen them in a gourmet sandwich shop or the produce aisle, looking like loose tangles of little pale threads with tiny unopened peas at the top. You may even have tasted them and decided "Not bad," because of their fresh, lively taste and texture.

What are sprouts exactly? Well, there are a lot of different types – almost as many as there are edible plants. Bean sprouts, sunflower sprouts, rye sprouts... every plant-based food started with a sprout and grew from there. Grains, seeds, and legumes can all be sprouted, such as wheat and barley, [carrot seeds oil](#), coriander seeds, and groundnuts.

But the main reason for eating sprouts is about nutrition and digestion. It's essentially about getting the most benefit out of a plant in the most biologically concentrated form. When you sprout foods, you increase proteolytic enzymes that make both carbohydrates and proteins digestible. While your body produces [proteolytic enzymes](#) when you eat foods that don't contain digestive enzymes, your body is forced to manufacture them (instead of making enzymes it *should* be making). After a while, your body's ability to produce the right enzymes wanes along with its ability to fight off disease.

The good news: enzymes from sprouted foods can replace those your body no longer produces.

Sprouts as young as three days old contain 10 to 100 times the glucoraphanin, the main enzyme inducer, of the mature vegetable, which helps protect against chemical cancer-causing agents. Eating sprouted foods not only boosts the antioxidant [vitamin C](#) content, according to *Dr. Mercola's Total Health Program* (Dr. Joseph Mercola and Nancy Lee Bentley; 2003) but also increases the [chlorophyll](#) content (a good thing), which creates a hostile environment for harmful bacteria and detoxifies your body while boosting your oxygen and immune system levels.

Health Benefits of Sprouts

Some find sprouts to be a rather odd thing to eat when the full-grown variety is on hand, but they come with their own hugely beneficial packages of nutrients that are missing from the adult version, so to speak. It only stands to reason that from the seed to the full-grown plant, there are different nutrients, and some are concentrated. The vitamin E content, for example (which boosts your immune system and protects cells from free radical damage) can be as high as 7.5 mg in a cup of broccoli sprouts compared to 1.5 mg in the same amount of raw or cooked [broccoli](#). The selenium content can go from 28 mg versus 1.5 on the same scale.

While an entire cup of sprouts may be more than you'd consume at a time, the above profile speaks to the nutrition they provide. In this amount, you get 43 percent of the daily recommended value in vitamin K (for bone strength and formation and increased protection from neuronal damage in the brain, which is helpful in treating Alzheimer's disease). You also get 23 percent of the DV in vitamin C (a proven infection fighter) and 16 percent of the folate (required for DNA, the genetic material found in all cells of the body, and amino acids, the building blocks of proteins, without which our chances of chances of developing anemia, heart disease, stroke, and cancer would increase).

Sprouts are also an excellent source of fiber, manganese, [riboflavin](#), and copper, along with smaller but significant amounts of protein, thiamin, niacin, Vitamin B6, [pantothenic acid](#), iron, magnesium, phosphorus, and [potassium](#).

Mung Beans Sprouts Nutrition Facts

Serving Size: 3.5 ounces (100 grams), raw

	Amt. Per Serving	% Daily Value*
Calories	30	
Calories from Fat	2	
Total Fat	0 g	0%
Saturated Fat	0 g	0%
Trans Fat		
Cholesterol	0 mg	0%
Sodium	6 mg	0%
Total Carbohydrates	6 g	3%
Dietary Fiber	2 g	7%
Sugar	4 g	
Protein	3 g	
Vitamin A0%	Vitamin C	22%
Calcium1%	Iron	5%

**Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie*

Studies on Sprout

Sulforaphane, a natural compound derived from broccoli/broccoli sprouts, was examined in a clinical study for its ability to inhibit breast cancer stem cells (CSCs) and the potential mechanism. Scientists found it to not only decrease the breast cancer cell population, but also reduce the size and number of primary mammospheres (cell clusters) by 65 to 80 percent.

The conclusion of the study: sulforaphane inhibits breast CSCs and down-regulates the self-renewal pathway, which supports the use of sulforaphane for the chemoprevention of breast cancer stem cells.¹

Another study was conducted to evaluate the biological, alcohol dehydrogenase (ADH, an enzyme that inhibits toxic alcohol molecules compromising our nervous systems), and antiproliferative activities of different extracts of mung bean seeds and sprouts. All extracts from the sprouts showed higher contents of total phenolics, total flavonoids, and the diphenyl-2-picrylhydrazyl (DPPH) radical scavenging activity than from seeds. The sprout extracts were more effective against human pulmonary carcinoma and human gastric carcinoma cells than the seeds.

The conclusion was that sprout extracts could be a source of antioxidants with health benefits.