



# The Good Cheat

## 5 Foods to Sneak into Your Diet

It's common knowledge that we should eat nutritional foods like leafy greens, fresh vegetables and healthy carbs. But it isn't always easy (or flavorful) to force down kale and get through a serving of broccoli. Here, five ways to sneak nutrition into your diet without feeling tortured.

By AMANDA OGLE

### YOGURT

I know, duh, you're already eating yogurt because it's good for you. But it's also an easy substitute ingredient. It's great for baking—replace yogurt for fats in recipes like buttermilk, oil, butter and shortening. Be cautious of sweetened, flavored yogurts though, which are full of sugar. Yogurt is also a great substitute for sour cream in dips and sauces. Rejoice! We live in a world where healthy ranch dressing is possible.

### AVOCADO

You also probably know avocados are full of the "good kind of fat." And while avocado is perfect with Tex-Mex (*hola guacamole!*), maybe you're not using it to its full potential. The creamy texture of an avocado is perfect in smoothies (making it taste more like a sinful milkshake). Luvina Sabree, owner of So Natural Catering in Harker Heights, says that it's a great way to add healthy fat to smoothies. Mashed avocado is a good substitute for mayo on sandwiches, cutting down fat content. Another trick is to substitute avocado for butter when baking. Swapping half of the butter can cut about 40 percent of the fat. Hello, avocado brownies and chocolate chip cookies. Goodbye, guilt by butter and stretchy pants.

### CHIA SEEDS

You've probably been wondering what the deal is with these tiny seeds you see everywhere. They're popular for

a reason. Chia seeds are full of fiber, omega-3 fatty acids and protein. Bonus: they make you feel full, which helps you avoid overeating and raiding the pantry after dinner. Sprinkle chia seeds over a bowl of low-sugar pudding or a smoothie. Or, better yet, make your own chia seed pudding with milk or a milk substitute.

### LEAFY GREENS

Full of vitamins, minerals and fiber, leafy greens are essential to a healthy diet, even though they can taste like the dirt they came from. Instead of forcing down a dry kale salad, add greens to your smoothie. Kale is a bit harder to blend completely smooth, but spinach breaks down in the blender beautifully and you won't even notice it in a smoothie with fruits like apple, strawberry, banana and orange. For a savory trick, add leafy greens to hot soups and chili when they're almost done cooking—the greens will wilt and add flavor to the soup.

### ZUCCHINI

Full of fiber and vitamins, zucchini is a versatile vegetable that is easy to sneak into many dishes. Cooked zucchini easily blends in with other flavors and becomes soft. There's no crunch to signal you: "Hey, there are your veggies!" Significantly cut carbs in spaghetti by replacing noodles with "zoodles," or spiralized zucchini. Sabree suggests using spaghetti squash instead of pasta noodles. Tuck zucchini into casseroles and blend it with sauces for added nutrients, or shred them raw into baked goods like bread and muffins for an added healthy bonus.