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Green Foods

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BY DR. STEVEN SCHECHTER, N.D.

Are you eating your five to seven daily servings of vegetables recommended by the USDA and National Cancer Institute? Surveys show 80% of Americans fail to meet the recommended guidelines.

While fresh vegetables are ideal in providing vital nutrients and chlorophyll, if you don't have the time to prepare them throughout your day ...an alternative and convenient source can be found in green food supplements.

While fresh vegetables are ideal in providing vital nutrients and chlorophyll, green products in tablets, powders and drink mixes can go a long way toward providing dietary support for a not-so-perfect diet, providing nutrient and chlorophyll intake to combat the challenges of today's hectic lifestyles.

You can now choose from a variety of exotic sounding names-chlorella, Aphanizomenon Flos Aquae (AFA), spirulina - and familiar plants such as barley and wheat grasses. How

do you choose the right one for you? It's a matter of taste and choice; like going to the produce department and selecting spinach, Romaine lettuce, or a package of mixed greens. The green food supplements are much denser in nutrients and chlorophyll than lettuce, and although the algae and grasses share similarities, their differences react subtly on the human body and they can be taken singly or blended together.

The algae are nature's most primary food. They are single-celled plants millions of years old.

Chinese herbalists treated vitamin deficiencies with blue-green algae thousands of years ago. Mayans and Aztecs ate algae hundreds of years ago. The Kanembu natives in Chad still make cakes out of the algae harvested from the lake nearby. Eating algae has a long history. The three main ones are as follows:



BLUE-GREEN ALGAE (AFA)

Klamath Lake is one of the few remaining alkaline lakes on earth, with a high mineral content due to volcanic ash deposited 7,000 years ago. Its lake water contains 60 times the nutrients blue-green algae need to reach their full potential, resulting in an algae that is nature's most oxygenating food.



Aphanizomenon Flos Aquae called Blue-Green Algae because of its color, contains 22 amino acids and has 75% protein assimilation, with a full spectrum of naturally chelated

minerals (organically bound), and will provide an abundance of beta carotene, most of the B-complex vitamins and some Vitamin E. It is the richest of all the algae in vitamin B-12. It is the algae of choice for the brain and nervous system, as it has much higher neuro-peptide precursor concentration than

spirulina or chlorella and is reported to have a supportive effect on the hypothalamus, the pineal and pituitary glands.

CHLORELLA

Known as the "King of Alkaline forming foods," this single-celled, fresh-water algae is the first known form of plant life with a true nucleus.

It has the toughest cell wall of any of the algae. The most effective chlorella is cracked to release its highly digestible nutrients. This tough cell wall is said to contain cellulose micro-fibrils with the unique property of absorbing toxins and heavy metals such as uranium and lead. As a result it is intended to provide dietary support for general well-being. Like spirulina, it supports the immune system through stimulating T-cells and promoting the body's interferon production. It

contains up to 7% chlorophyll, the highest percentage known to the plant world. It is also rich in amino acids and contains up to 60% vegetable protein.

It is richer in fatty acids than A F A or spirulina.

SPIRULINA

A freshwater algae from the clean, volcanic lakes of Hawaii, this best known algae has a spiral

form. It's blue-green color denotes the presence of both chlorophyll (green) and phycocyanin (blue) pigments. It is also a powerful alkalizing food, and unlike AFA which seems to concentrate more on the brain and nervous system, it has a more systemic effect on the entire body. It supports the immune system. Its protein is 95% assimilable gram for gram with all its essential amino acids in proper balance, it contains over 2,000 enzymes and full range of vitamins as well as 12 different carotenoids, especially iron and magnesium. It is also recommended during pregnancy and is said to contain almost as much gamma linoleic acid as mother's milk. Its cell walls are high in mucopolysaccharides, making it very absorbable.

Barley and wheat grain have been used for centuries but only recently did the grasses of these two plants gain recognition as important nutrient sources.



B A R L E Y GRASS

The green leaves are cut at 12-14 inches before they mature and form grain. They are juiced and carefully freeze-dried

to protect their vital nutrients. They contain vitamins, minerals, proteins, and chlorophyll. Green barley juice can give you calcium,

If You don't like to eat your spinach you can have your chlorophyll through supplementation in powders, drink mixes, or tablets. You can choose one or the other of the algae, the grasses or, if you can't decide, all of them.

vitamin C, and iron. It is an antioxidant containing carotenoids, vitamin C and E, selenium and superoxide dismutase (SOD). It is helpful in supporting a natural healthy liver.



Wheat Grass

People with wheat allergies may use it safely as it does not contain the gluten of the wheat grain. Its young leaves, like barley grass are harvested long before they mature and produce their seed. It is one of the most common green grasses grown and, with a sweeter taste than barley grass, is juiced on a daily basis in many countries. It contains 25% protein, balanced amino acid profile.

Each of these greens is a powerhouse of vitamins, minerals and most importantly-Chlorophyll.

CHLOROPHYLL-

GREEN GOLD



Chlorophyll is essential to all life on earth. Apart from its main function as the "life blood" of plants, it helps plants purify the air, raise oxygen levels, harness the sun's energy for plant food and it carries a host of health benefits for us as well.

Chlorophyll is so similar to heme (hemoglobin) in our blood that only a single molecule separates the two: Magnesium at the center of chlorophyll, and iron at the center of the heme in red blood cells. Thus chlorophyll has a powerful oxygenating effect on the blood.

It is easily digestible because of its water solubility, yet it is rich in fat-soluble substances such as Vitamin K.

Since Priestley became interested in chlorophyll in 1780, scientists have observed many other benefits. Studies show chlorophyll supports the immune and circulatory system.

So, if you don't like to eat your spinach you can have your chlorophyll through supplementation in powders or drink mixes, or, if you dislike the taste, in tablets. You can choose one or the other of the algae, the grasses or, if you can't decide, all of them.

Whatever you decide, make sure to include at least one serving of these nutrient rich foods in your supplementation regime and enjoy the benefits of this "green sunshine."

Dr. Schechter is a practicing naturopathic doctor, consultant, speaker,