

HEALTHY CUCUMBER RECIPES



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Salad

Healthy Cucumber Recipes

CUCUMBER-LEMONADE CHILLER

☐ Heart Health ☐ Diabetes
☐ Weight Loss ☒ Gluten Free

ACTIVE: 15 MIN **TOTAL:** 15 MIN

Pick up rosemary, cucumbers and lemons to concoct this grown-up lemonade that will keep you cool on a hot day.

- 3 large cucumbers
- 1 tablespoon chopped fresh rosemary, plus 4 sprigs for garnish
- 1 cup water
- 6 ounces ($\frac{3}{4}$ cup) gin
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup lemon juice
- 3 tablespoons agave syrup (see *Tip*)

1. Cut 12 thin slices of cucumber for garnish.
2. Peel and chop the rest of the cucumber; transfer to a food processor, add rosemary and puree. Pour the puree through a fine-mesh strainer set over a medium bowl or large measuring cup. Press on the solids to extract all the juice. Add water, gin, lemon juice and agave syrup to the cucumber juice; stir until the agave is dissolved. Divide among 4 ice-filled glasses. Garnish with cucumber slices and rosemary sprigs.

SERVES 4

Per serving: 169 calories; 0 g fat (0 g sat, 0 g mono); 0 mg cholesterol; 18 g carbohydrate; 12 g added sugars; 1 g protein; 1 g fiber; 6 mg sodium; 241 mg potassium.

Nutrition bonus: Vitamin C (32% daily value).

Carbohydrate servings: 1

Exchanges: 1 fruit



TIP

Agave syrup or nectar is the naturally sweet juice extracted from the agave plant. It has a lower glycemic index than table sugar, but is even sweeter. Use it in moderation when substituting for table sugar. Look for it near other sweeteners in natural-foods stores.

Healthy Cucumber Recipes

CLEAN BREEZE SMOOTHIE

✓ Heart Health ✓ Diabetes

✓ Weight Loss ✓ Gluten Free

ACTIVE: 10 MIN **TOTAL:** 10 MIN

This refreshing smoothie is made with cucumber and kiwi and gets a kick from ginger-flavored kombucha and fresh cilantro.

- 1 small cucumber, chopped
- 2 ripe kiwis, peeled
- 1 cup ginger-flavored kombucha
(see *Tip*)
- ½ cup low-fat plain Greek yogurt
- 2 tablespoons fresh cilantro leaves
- 6 ice cubes

Combine cucumber, kiwis, kombucha, yogurt, cilantro and ice cubes in blender; blend until smooth. Serve immediately.

SERVES 2: ABOUT 1¾ CUPS EACH

Per serving: 116 calories; 2 g fat (1 g sat, 0 g mono); 4 mg cholesterol; 21 g carbohydrate; 1 g added sugars; 6 g protein; 3 g fiber; 32 mg sodium; 424 mg potassium.

Nutrition bonus: Vitamin C (102% daily value).

Carbohydrate servings: 1½

Exchanges: 1 fruit, 1 vegetable, ½ reduced-fat milk



TIP

Look for kombucha tea near other refrigerated teas in natural foods stores and well-stocked supermarkets.

Kombucha is available in many different flavors—for this smoothie we like the taste of ginger kombucha the best.

Healthy Cucumber Recipes

SALMON & CUCUMBER MINI SMØRREBRØD

☐ Heart Health ☒ Diabetes
☐ Weight Loss ☐ Gluten Free

ACTIVE: 15 MIN **TOTAL:** 15 MIN

TO MAKE AHEAD: Cover and refrigerate for up to 8 hours.

Crunchy cucumber, fresh dill and gravlax top thinly sliced rye bread for a delightful Danish appetizer. Smørrebrød—which translates in Danish to “buttered bread”—are endlessly creative open-face sandwiches, meant to be eaten with a knife and fork as a light meal. Here we make appetizer-size smørrebrød, perfect for entertaining.

- ¼ cup sour cream
- 3 tablespoons nonfat plain yogurt (preferably Greek-style; see *Tip*)
- 16 slices cocktail-size thin rye or pumpernickel bread
- 16 slices cucumber
- 16 small sprigs fresh dill
- 16 slices Scandinavian-style cured salmon (gravlax) or smoked salmon

Combine sour cream and yogurt in a small bowl. Top each slice of bread with a slice of cucumber, 1 teaspoon of the sour cream mixture, a sprig of dill and a slice of salmon.

MAKES: 16 PIECES

Per 2 pieces: 91 calories; 2 g fat (1 g sat, 1 g mono); 8 mg cholesterol; 10 g carbohydrate; 0 g added sugars; 7 g protein; 1 g fiber; 288 mg sodium; 62 mg potassium.

Carbohydrate servings: ½

Exchanges: ½ starch, 1 lean meat



TIP

Greek-style yogurt is made by removing the whey from cultured milk. Removing the whey gives it an extra thick and creamy texture—making it the perfect ingredient for a lower-fat dessert topping. You can strain regular yogurt to make it thick like Greek-style yogurt. Line a sieve with cheesecloth and set it over a bowl. (Alternatively, use a coffee filter lined with filter paper.) Spoon in 1 cup nonfat plain yogurt and let it drain in the refrigerator until reduced to ¾ cup, about 2 hours.

Healthy Cucumber Recipes

WHITE GAZPACHO

☒ Heart Health ☒ Diabetes

☒ Weight Loss ☐ Gluten Free

ACTIVE: 20 MIN **TOTAL:** 2 HRS 20 MIN

TO MAKE AHEAD: Prepare through Step 2. Cover and refrigerate for up to 1 day. Finish with Step 3 just before serving.

White gazpacho is made with bread, almonds, grapes and garlic and is one of the traditional Spanish gazpacho variations. In this white gazpacho soup recipe we add cucumbers and honeydew, whir it in a blender and it becomes silky, a little toasty (from the almonds) and refreshing.

- 2 English cucumbers, divided
- 2 cups green grapes, divided
- 2 slices country white bread, crusts removed if desired, torn into pieces
- 2 cups “no-chicken” broth (see *Tips*) or reduced-sodium chicken broth
- 1 cup chopped honeydew melon
- ½ cup sliced blanched almonds, lightly toasted (see *Tips*), divided
- 1 small clove garlic, halved
- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons white-wine vinegar
- ¾ teaspoon salt

- 1.** Dice enough unpeeled cucumber to equal ½ cup and slice enough grapes to equal ½ cup; cover and refrigerate.
- 2.** Peel the remaining cucumbers; cut into chunks. Working in two batches, puree the peeled cucumber, the remaining grapes, bread, broth, melon, 6 tablespoons almonds, garlic, oil, vinegar and salt in a blender until smooth. Transfer to a large bowl, cover and refrigerate until chilled, at least 2 hours and up to 1 day.
- 3.** Serve garnished with the remaining 2 tablespoons almonds and the reserved cucumber and grapes.

SERVES 6: ABOUT 1 CUP EACH

Per serving: 211 calories; 12 g fat (1 g sat, 8 g mono); 0 mg cholesterol; 24 g carbohydrate; 1 g added sugars; 5 g protein; 3 g fiber; 521 mg sodium; 345 mg potassium.

Nutrition bonus: Vitamin C (22% daily value).

Carbohydrate servings: 1½

Exchanges: ½ starch, 1 fruit, ½ vegetable, 2 fat



TIPS

- To make White Gazpacho vegetarian, use vegetarian “no-chicken” broth instead of regular vegetable broth for its rich flavor. Look for it with other broths in well-stocked supermarkets.
- Toast nuts before using in a recipe for the best flavor. To toast sliced nuts, cook in a small dry skillet over medium-low heat, stirring constantly, until fragrant and lightly browned, 2 to 4 minutes.

Healthy Cucumber Recipes

SUMMER TOMATO, ONION & CUCUMBER SALAD

☒ Heart Health ☐ Diabetes
☒ Weight Loss ☒ Gluten Free

ACTIVE: 20 MIN **TOTAL:** 50 MIN (INCLUDING 30 MINUTES MARINATING TIME)

TO MAKE AHEAD: Prepare through Step 2 up to 1 hour ahead.

Fresh wedges of tomato, thinly sliced onion and sliced cucumber dressed simply with vinegar and oil makes the most simple salad possible—think of it as the Southern counterpart to the classic Italian tomato-and-mozzarella salad. It is best enjoyed at the height of summer, when tomatoes and cucumbers are fresh from the garden.

- 3 tablespoons rice vinegar
- 1 tablespoon canola oil
- 1 teaspoon honey
- ½ teaspoon salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper, or more to taste
- 2 medium cucumbers
- 4 medium tomatoes, cut into ½-inch wedges
- 1 Vidalia or other sweet onion, halved and very thinly sliced
- 2 tablespoons coarsely chopped fresh herbs, such as flat-leaf parsley, chives and/or tarragon

1. Whisk vinegar, oil, honey, salt and pepper in a large shallow bowl.
2. Remove alternating stripes of peel from the cucumbers. Slice the cucumbers into thin rounds. Add the cucumber slices, tomatoes and onion to the dressing; gently toss to combine. Let stand at room temperature for at least 30 minutes and up to 1 hour.
3. Just before serving, add herbs and toss again.

SERVES 6: ABOUT 1½ CUPS EACH

Per serving: 58 calories; 3 g fat (0 g sat, 2 g mono); 0 mg cholesterol; 8 g carbohydrate; 1 g added sugars; 1 g protein; 2 g fiber; 202 mg sodium; 264 mg potassium.

Nutrition bonus: Vitamin C (20% daily value).



Healthy Cucumber Recipes

MEATBALL BANH MI

- ☒ Heart Health
- ☐ Diabetes
- ☐ Weight Loss
- ☐ Gluten Free

ACTIVE: 50 MIN **TOTAL:** 50 MIN

TO MAKE AHEAD: Freeze cooked meatballs airtight for up to 3 months. Defrost before serving cold or reheating.

This banh mi (Vietnamese sandwich) is filled with a zingy slaw and chicken-and-pork meatballs spiked with fresh herbs. Look for chile-garlic sauce and fish sauce near other Asian ingredients in most supermarkets.

SLAW

- 3 tablespoons lime juice
- 2 teaspoons sugar
- 1¾ cups shredded carrot
- 1¾ cups shredded daikon radish (see Tip)
- ½ cup thinly sliced scallion greens
- ¼ cup chopped fresh basil

MEATBALLS AND SANDWICH

- 8 ounces ground pork
- 8 ounces ground chicken breast
- 1 8-ounce can water chestnuts, drained and finely chopped
- ¼ cup finely chopped scallion whites
- 3 cloves garlic, minced
- 1 teaspoon fish sauce
- 1 teaspoon chile-garlic sauce or other Asian hot sauce
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground pepper
- 2 20-inch baguettes, preferably whole-wheat, cut into thirds
- ¼ cup low-fat mayonnaise
- 1-2 teaspoons chile-garlic sauce or other Asian hot sauce
- 36 thin slices English cucumber (about ½ large)
- ⅔ cup gently packed fresh cilantro

1. To prepare slaw: Whisk lime juice and sugar in a medium bowl. Add carrot, daikon, scallion greens and basil and toss to coat. Set aside.

2. To prepare meatballs: Preheat oven to 450°F. Line a large baking sheet with foil and coat with cooking spray.

3. Gently mix pork, chicken, water chestnuts, scallion whites, garlic, fish sauce, chile-garlic sauce and pepper in a large bowl (do not overmix). Using a generous

2 tablespoons each, make 18 meatballs. Bake on the prepared baking sheet until just cooked through, 15 to 20 minutes.

4. To assemble sandwiches: Cut each portion of baguette in half horizontally, then pull out about half of the soft bread in the center of each piece (reserve for another use, if desired). Combine mayonnaise and chile-garlic sauce to taste in a small bowl. Spread about ½ tablespoon of the mixture on each piece of baguette. Divide the reserved slaw among the sandwiches and top with cucum-

ber and cilantro. Add 3 meatballs to each sandwich. Serve immediately.

SERVES 6

Per serving: 430 calories; 9 g fat (2 g sat, 2 g mono); 57 mg cholesterol; 67 g carbohydrate; 3 g added sugars; 24 g protein; 5 g fiber; 821 mg sodium; 474 mg potassium.

Nutrition bonus: Vitamin A (117% daily value), Vitamin C (39% dv), Iron (23% dv).

TIP

Daikon is a long, white radish; it can be found in Asian groceries and most natural-foods stores. If you can't find it, the more common round red radish can be used as a substitute.



Healthy Cucumber Recipes

SESAME CHICKEN CUCUMBER NOODLE SALAD

- ☒ Heart Health ☒ Diabetes
- ☒ Weight Loss ☐ Gluten Free

ACTIVE: 45 MIN **TOTAL:** 45 MIN

TO MAKE AHEAD: Cover and refrigerate the salad for up to 1 day or prepare the dressing (Step 2), cover and refrigerate for up to 5 days; thin with a little water as needed.

This sesame chicken and noodle salad couldn't be simpler to make. And the secret to this saucy sesame chicken and noodle salad is in its beautiful raw veggies—it's got great crunch. It's a simple, healthy, affordable dish to serve on a hot summer's night or to bring to a potluck: just toss the salad with the dressing when you're ready to serve. (Recipe adapted from Simply Ming One-Pot Meals by Ming Tsai and Arthur Boehm; Kyle Books, 2010.)

- 8 ounces Chinese egg noodles or other thin noodles or pasta, fresh or dried
 - 1 cup creamy peanut butter
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup rice vinegar
 - 2 tablespoons toasted sesame oil
 - 2 tablespoons Shaoxing wine or dry sherry
 - 1 cup thinly sliced scallions
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup chopped fresh cilantro (optional)
 - 2 tablespoons naturally brewed reduced-sodium soy sauce
 - 1 tablespoon Asian chile sauce, such as sambal oelek or Sriracha
 - 2 heads baby romaine or 1 head regular romaine lettuce
 - $1\frac{1}{2}$ pounds cooked boneless, skinless chicken breasts, sliced crosswise into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch slices and chilled
 - 2 medium red bell peppers, cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch dice
 - 1 large English cucumber, peeled, seeded, halved lengthwise and cut into $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch slices
 - Salt to taste
 - Freshly ground pepper to taste
 - Toasted sesame seeds for garnish
1. Fill a large bowl with water and add ice cubes. Cook noodles in boiling water until just tender, 2 to 4 minutes if fresh, about 6 minutes for dry (or according to package directions). Drain and transfer the noodles



to the ice water. When the noodles are cold, drain well and transfer to a very large bowl. Set aside.

2. Meanwhile, whisk peanut butter, vinegar, sesame oil and Shaoxing (or sherry) in a bowl until smooth. Add scallions, cilantro, if using, soy sauce and hot sauce, and stir to blend.

3. If using baby romaine, half lengthwise, notch out the core, and cut crosswise into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces. If using regular romaine, remove the tougher outer leaves. Halve lengthwise, notch out the core, halve again, and cut crosswise into $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch pieces. You should have about 8 cups.

4. Add the lettuce, chicken, bell peppers and cucumber to the noodles. Add three-

fourths of the dressing and toss to coat. Season with salt and pepper. Add the remaining dressing if desired.

5. Transfer the salad to a serving bowl. Serve garnished with sesame seeds.

SERVES 12: ABOUT $1\frac{1}{3}$ CUPS EACH

Per serving: 242 calories; 11 g fat (2 g sat, 5 g mono); 34 mg cholesterol; 17 g carbohydrate; 0 g added sugars; 18 g protein; 3 g fiber; 312 mg sodium; 386 mg potassium.

Nutrition bonus: Vitamin A (69% daily value), Vitamin C (48% dv), Folate (19% dv).

Carbohydrate servings: 1

Exchanges: 1 starch, 1 vegetable, $1\frac{1}{2}$ lean meat, 2 fat

Healthy Cucumber Recipes

CHILE-CRUSTED SCALLOPS WITH CUCUMBER SALAD

✓ Heart Health ✓ Diabetes
✓ Weight Loss ✓ Gluten Free

ACTIVE: 40 MIN **TOTAL:** 40 MIN

TO MAKE AHEAD: Prepare through Step 2. Cover the salad and scallop skewers separately and refrigerate for up to 8 hours.

EQUIPMENT: Four 12-inch skewers

A refreshing salad of cucumbers and roasted cashews makes a nice contrast to these smoky scallops. You can make the salad and scallop skewers up to 8 hours in advance; cover separately and store in the refrigerator until you're ready to grill.

SALAD

- 2 medium cucumbers
- ½ cup salted roasted cashews, coarsely chopped (2 ounces)
- 2 scallions (white and light green parts), thinly sliced
- 2 teaspoons lemon juice
- ¼ cup extra-virgin olive oil
- ¼ cup coarsely chopped flat-leaf parsley
- ⅛ teaspoon salt

SCALLOPS

- 1 teaspoon cumin seeds
- 2 tablespoons minced seeded serrano chile
- 1 teaspoon freshly cracked black pepper
- ½ teaspoon kosher salt
- 1-1¼ pounds dry sea scallops (see *Tips*), tough muscle removed

1. To prepare salad: Peel and seed cucumbers; quarter lengthwise and slice ¼ inch thick. Combine the cucumbers, cashews, scallions, lemon juice, oil, parsley and salt in a large bowl.

2. To prepare scallops: Toast cumin seeds in a small skillet over medium heat until fragrant, about 1 minute. Transfer to a cutting board and let cool, then coarsely chop. Combine the cumin seeds, chile, pepper and salt in a small bowl. Rinse scallops, pat dry and rub with the spice mixture. Thread the scallops onto four 12-inch skewers.

3. Preheat grill to medium-high. Oil the grill rack. Grill the scallops until cooked through, about 4 minutes per side. Carefully remove the scallops from the skewers. Serve warm with the cucumber salad.



SERVES 4

Per serving: 326 calories; 22 g fat (3 g sat, 15 g mono); 37 mg cholesterol; 11 g carbohydrate; 22 g protein; 2 g fiber; 587 mg sodium; 622 mg potassium.

Nutrition bonus: Magnesium (29% daily value), Vitamin C (25% dv).

Carbohydrate servings: 1

Exchanges: 1 vegetable, 3 lean meat, 3½ fat (mono)

TIPS

- Be sure to request “dry” sea scallops, which have not been treated with sodium tripolyphosphate (STP). They are more flavorful and will brown the best.
- To oil a grill rack: Oil a folded paper towel, hold it with tongs and rub it over the rack. (Do not use cooking spray on a hot grill.)
- To grill with wooden skewers: Wrap the exposed parts with foil to keep them from burning. (Contrary to conventional wisdom, soaking skewers in water doesn't protect them.)

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