

Sunflower Seed Spinach Salad

Note: The health benefits found in these ingredients will vary with each individual and will also depend heavily upon an individual's commitment to consistently making healthy life-style choices.

INGREDIENTS FOR SALAD

6 oz – organic baby spinach
½ cup – dried cranberries (low sugar)
¼ cup – apple (chopped)
¼ cup – shredded parmesan
½ cup – sunflower seeds (out of shell)

Dressing:

Balsamic Vinaigrette
(or your choice of Vinaigrette dressing)

A few of the health benefits from spinach:

The high content of antioxidants in spinach can help eliminate the effects of free radicals in the body.

Free radicals are toxins produced by our own body, (among other things), which cause damage to our healthy cells. This can lead to a variety of diseases, including cancer and heart disease. The build up of free radicals has also been linked to an increased risk of mental decline as we age.

Scientists have found that a diet rich in spinach can help the brain stay sharp as we age. [*A study completed at the University of Florida revealed that rats who were given a diet high in spinach performed better on memory and learning tests.*]

A few of the health benefits from sunflower seeds:

Sunflower seeds are an excellent source of essential fatty acids, ('poly-unsaturated' & 'mono-unsaturated'), which benefit both the brain & heart. These fats also help lower the bad cholesterol and increase the good cholesterol in the blood. Research studies consistently reveal that a diet rich in monounsaturated fats can help prevent coronary artery disease and stroke by contributing to a healthy 'serum lipid' profile. [A cardiovascular risk prediction based on total cholesterol]

Sunflower seeds are a great source of the B-complex group of vitamins, providing an array of health benefits, including a contribution to improved cognitive functioning.

High in Vitamin E: Battles free radicals and is great for our skin.

A few of the health benefits from cranberries:

Good for our digestive health...due to the high content of fiber in cranberries.

Some studies have shown cranberries to help improve blood flow through the arteries.

Cranberries are high in antioxidants, fighting the toxic, cell damaging free radicals in our body.

The high content of anti-microbial and anti-inflammatory antioxidants in cranberries help prevent urinary tract infections...and even gum disease.

A few of the health benefits from apples:

Apples provide 14% (DV) of Vitamin C...one of the most important vitamins in the diet and provides the immune system with a big boost.

Apples help the body absorb iron and strengthens 'connective tissue'. (*This means it's good for our skin.*)

Apples contain potassium, an electrolyte that assists the body in its effort to maintain fluid balance and healthy blood pressure rates.

Potassium also helps the body get rid of excess sodium through the urine.