



NUTRITION TIPS

Vegetables Lettuce

Lettuce is one of the most delicate salad plants around. It contains a rich variety of nutrients like dietary fibre, some carbohydrates and proteins and a trace of fat. It also contains a lot of vitamin A and potassium and moderate proportions of vitamin C, calcium, iron and copper.

When buying lettuce, make sure the leaves are without rot. Wrap the fresh, unwashed leaves in a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator for a few days. To serve, rinse the leaves in very cold water, dry with a clean towel and then cut to pieces. Lettuce leaves are best eaten when they are fresh and crisp and so should not be stored for more than a few days.

Cucumbers

Cucumbers belong to the same family of vegetables as pumpkin and watermelon. Its flesh is primarily composed of water, but it also contains vitamins A and C, a lot of fibre and a variety of minerals like silica, potassium and magnesium. The silica is vital for building connective tissues like muscles, tendons,

ligaments, cartilage and bones in children. Cucumbers are very sensitive to heat, so when buying them, pick the ones that are firm, rounded at the edges and green. Cucumbers give salad and sandwiches a crispy feel in the mouth and are better served unpeeled. Leftovers should however be wrapped tightly in plastic bags or sealed containers and stored in the refrigerator to prevent them from drying out.

Cabbage

Cabbage is a round vegetable with several layers of leaves. It is cheap and is usually available throughout the year because it is easy to store.

The best cabbages are those that are firm and have gleaming, crispy leaves. Do not buy pre-cut cabbage and avoid the ones with severely damaged outer leaves. To store, put in a plastic bag and keep in the refrigerator. This will keep the cabbage fresh while also retaining its vitamin C concentration. To prepare cabbage, wash it under running water to remove debris, remove the outer leaves, then wash again and cut to pieces before

cooking or eating. You can store the unused cabbage by covering it tightly with a plastic wrapper before refrigerating.

Okra

Okra is a vegetable whose young, tender pods are used for soups. It is a source of valuable nutrients like vitamin B6, folic acid and dietary fibre. Okra's soluble fibre helps to lower children's cholesterol level while the insoluble fibre keeps their intestinal tracts healthy. When buying fresh okra, pick the young, tender pods that are free from bruises. To store, you can simply freeze them, or cut them into polythene bags before freezing. You can also store cooked okra in small plastic bowls, tightly covered in a freezer. Do not however store for more than three days.

When cut, okra gives a sticky juice, which is useful for making soups and stews. Okra can be served with peeper stew, which tastes absolutely delicious with garri or fufu.



For more information on child nutrition

Visit the Olu Akinkugbe Foundation
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