



Better Health With Broccoli Sprouts

It's that time of the year again, the time to make your health and nutrition top priority. This year, let's make the process fun and delicious, starting with a handful of my favorite nutrient dense functional foods and drinks.

Functional foods and drinks are special. They satisfy your taste buds, fill your belly, and soothe your cells. They're the foods that make you feel and look great. You know, the foods that make your body feel a sense of "ahh" instead of "blah". Functional foods and drinks are what I like to call "eat your heart outs". The more you eat and drink, the better.

We're going to start out with [broccoli sprouts](#), a functional, healing, and delicious super food. Believe it or not, broccoli sprouts are simply the immature version of traditionally grown broccoli. Instead of being grown to maturity in soil, broccoli sprouts are sprouted from seed and yield an extremely nutrient dense sprout.

Per serving, broccoli sprouts are 20x more nutritious than traditionally grown broccoli and contain a very powerful chemical compound called [sulforaphane](#). Sulforaphane is a molecule associated with knocking out cancer cells. Because of this, physicians and natural health practitioners often recommend broccoli sprouts as a whole food based preventative therapy for reducing the chances of certain cancers including prostate, bladder and breast.

While pouring over everything broccoli sprouts, I dove into the science and reviewed many [studies](#) linking sulforaphane to reduced rates of cancer, reduced tumor size, reduced inflammation, decreased arterial plaques, and improved glutathione, LDL and HDL cholesterol levels. And, given their tremendous power to aid health and wellness, scientific literature often refers to them as natural [chemoprotectants](#). Natural chemoprotectants, unlike pharmaceutical based cancer treatments, have the ability to target all systems and organs at once instead of a single organ approach.

Broccoli sprouts are especially beneficial for folks struggling with digestive issues. Broccoli sprouts, because they're sprouted, don't produce gas or GI distress like raw broccoli often does. Essentially, broccoli sprouts are the concentrated version of traditionally grown broccoli without the bulky fiber. And, if you have kiddos who aren't huge fans of the smell or taste of traditional broccoli, broccoli sprouts are the way to go.

Let's back track just a little and discuss what makes broccoli, plain old traditionally grown broccoli, so great. Broccoli, just like brussel sprouts, cabbage, and cauliflower, is a cruciferous vegetable. Cruciferous vegetables are known for their high levels of vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants, and phytochemicals.

The health benefits of broccoli are greatest when eaten raw, lightly steamed, or blanched. When broccoli is boiled or cooked for long periods of time, many of the important healing nutrients are cooked out.

To benefit from traditionally grown broccoli, researchers believe you would have to eat at least two pounds of raw or lightly cooked broccoli per week. But, it only takes 5 grams of broccoli sprouts to reap the same nutritional benefits.

The bottom line is that broccoli sprouts have the capacity to give your body an anti-cancer "super boost" unlike many other natural foods. And, because broccoli sprouts are 20x more nutritious than traditional broccoli, they're the ideal way to improve your health without, as I mentioned above, any gas or bloating.

Broccoli sprouts aren't grown commercially, but you can order the seeds and DIY at home. As you'll see, it's very easy to do and the cost is very low.

I've been told that the best place to order organic broccoli seeds is through a shop called "Johnny's". You can phone them at 207-437-4301 and simply request Item number 148. I buy in large quantities, but you can decide on starting with 4oz (\$9.00) or 1lb (\$12.00).

Keep in mind; a small amount of broccoli sprouts goes a long way. One pound of broccoli seeds will produce over ten pounds of sprouts. That translates into as much anti-cancer protection as 1000 pounds of traditionally grown [broccoli](#) provides.

Who would have thought that a sprout could do so much for the body in such small doses and without any sulfur smells or gastric distress? All the reason to make sure broccoli sprouts are on your healthy food list this year.

Now, let's get to sprouting!

Sprouting Instructions

Sprouting Time: 5-7 days

- Make sure you'll be home and not travelling. You'll have to tend to your sprouts for about a week.

- Sprouting Temperature: 60-80 degrees Fahrenheit
If the temps are cooler or warmer, the sprouts won't flourish.

- Yield: 1 Tbsp. seed = 1-1 1/2 cups sprouts
Remember, a little goes a long way!

- Place your organic broccoli seeds in a Ball or Mason jar and cover with cheesecloth or any other clean and porous material.

- You can also use reusable plastic sprouting lids available from Jaffe Brothers at 619-749-1133, which attach to Ball jars. This way, you won't have to use new cheesecloth each time.

- Secure the cloth with a rubber band.

- Fill the jar with filtered water and let soak overnight.

- In the morning, drain the water off of the seeds.

- The cloth will keep the seeds in the jar.

- Rinse your seeds with water again and let drain.

- Put the container on its side and place in a dark location that stays about 70 degrees.

- Rinse 2x each day with water and drain.

- Continue the rinse cycle until the seeds start to sprout.

- When the sprouts are 1-2 inches long, place them in a sunlit window. The sunlight will bring beautiful green colors to the sprouts.

You will soon see that broccoli sprouts look and taste similar to alfalfa sprouts and can be used in salads, wraps, sandwiches, stuffed in pita with hummus and vegetables, served on top of rice and in veggie bowls.

We love to top our salmon with a balsamic glaze and plenty of broccoli sprouts. My kids even ask for them on top of their scrambled eggs. Now that says something!

Make sure to get into a sprouting rhythm so that you always have sprouts to eat and plenty of sprouts sprouting.

Ben and I believe that if you can take a simple, natural, and tasty measure to boost your body's ability to defend and protect against cancer, just do it!