

Hate vegetables? Read this

It's not just kids that wrinkle their nose at a plate of green stuff.

Lots of fully-grown adults feel the same—inclined to hide their Brussels sprouts under their seat cushion if no one was watching.

If that's you, it's not a character flaw.

While many vegetables verge on sweet (like carrots, peas, beets), others have dominant bitter tones (think: kale, endives, rapini, and yep, Brussels sprouts).

Most animals—including humans—have a natural aversion to bitter flavors.

And some have a stronger aversion than others.

About a quarter of people are “supertasters”—folks who are extremely sensitive to all flavors, including bitter compounds in many vegetables.

So if you've never liked vegetables, and actually, just prefer bland foods overall (pass the buttered noodles, please)...

You might be a supertaster.

Or maybe you just haven't eaten vegetables prepared in a way that appeals to you... yet.

Not liking vegetables doesn't make you inherently unhealthy, but it probably does make it harder for you to, well, eat more vegetables.

If you want to eat more veggies (because of all the health benefits they offer) but you're also like, “I'd rather eat a sock,” try this three-step game plan.

1️⃣ Challenge

Hit up a grocery store with a decent produce selection, or a restaurant with some unique plant-based dishes, and pick a vegetable you normally wouldn't eat.

Maybe you haven't tried a certain veggie since you were eight and wrote it off as “barf-tastic.”

Or maybe you've just never tried a [insert new-to-you vegetable here].

Then [cue chanting] do it, do it, do it.

Eat it and see what happens. (It's an experiment! A dare, if you prefer.)

Even if you don't love your first experience, try to stay open-minded: Research suggests we may need to try new foods many times before we learn to like them.

(You might surprise yourself though.)

2️⃣ Complement

Combine vegetables with other foods to harmonize (or at least tone down) those bitter flavors.

Toss some Brussels sprouts to the roasting pan with your sweet potatoes. (Some people who despise steamed broccoli love roasted broccoli.)

Mix spinach into your dal or ramen bowl. Add spice, herbs, lemon juice, or a good quality vinegar.

3?? Cushion

Certain flavors can magically turn the bitter volume down.

Sweet and fatty flavors, especially, can interfere with your brain's perception of bitterness.

Excellent cushions include honey, maple syrup, olive oil, toasted nuts or seeds, and butter.

Here are a few sample combos for inspo:

- Kale with tahini and lemon juice
- Radicchio with goat cheese, peppers, and honey
- Asparagus with garlic, feta, avocado, and lemon
- Brussels sprouts with bacon and onions
- Broccoli with balsamic vinegar and olive oil
- Endive with mirin and walnuts

Not everyone needs to eat the same way.

(For example, a heaping spinach salad may not appeal to your palate, dietary goals, or cultural values.)

But most people benefit from eating a variety of plants, regularly.

Try different things, and find a roster of vegetables that:

- You digest well
- You can afford and access
- Align with your culture's and/or family's preferences and traditions, if that's meaningful to you
- You find reasonably delicious (prepared in the right way)

Your vegetable team is out there.

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ABOUT ME

I received my training from the Institute for Integrative Nutrition and Precision Nutrition where I learned about more than one hundred dietary theories and studied a variety of practical lifestyle coaching methods. Drawing on this knowledge, I will help you create a completely personalized



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“roadmap to health” that suits your unique body, lifestyle, preferences, and goals.

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