



Philip Lai Qi Gong Association

September Newsletter 2020

My dear Qi Gong friends:

One of my passions is growing delicious fresh vegetables in my garden. In September I am overwhelmed by the amount of wonderful food that I have grown.

Bitter Melon. One of the vegetables I grow each year is Bitter Melon. This is a popular vegetable in Chinese cooking and has many medicinal uses.



Nutritional Facts of Bitter Melon. The variety which is most used in Chinese cuisine is about 6" long, looking a bit like a cucumber. It can be used raw or cooked in stir-fries. It contains at least 32 active chemicals. It has a signature sour taste from a type of alkaloid called momordicine. In its immature form, Bitter Melon is a good source of vitamin A, vitamin C, iron and phosphorus. It contains many beneficial phytonutrients and antioxidants.

Benefits of Bitter Melon. Bitter Melon has been used in Traditional Chinese Medicine for thousands of years as well as in India and Japan. Here are some of the health benefits:

- 1) **Regulate Blood Sugar Levels**
In raw and juice form, it has been shown to normalize blood sugar levels and manage diabetes symptoms such as kidney damage, eye disorders, heart complications and blood vessel damage.
- 2) **Fighting Bacterial and Viral Infections**
It has antibacterial and antiviral agents which have been used to treat the bacteria which cause stomach ulcers and has also been used to treat HIV infections.
- 3) **Improving Digestive & Liver Health**
Bitter Melon extract can reduce stomach and intestinal disorders such as irritable bowel disease, decrease kidney stones and detoxify the Liver.

4) **Cancer Protection**

The strong anti-oxidant properties of Bitter Melon are thought to be effective in preventing and treating cancers such as leukemia, lymphoma, melanoma, breast and prostate cancer.

5) **Treating Respiratory Disorders**

Juice from Bitter Melon is used in TCM to treat dry coughs, bronchitis and sore throat. The juice, fruit and seeds are beneficial to prevent coughs and excess mucus.

Side Effects of Bitter Melon. Bitter Melon is not a replacement for insulin in diabetes treatment. It can lower your blood sugar too much and careful monitoring is needed. Pregnant women and those who are breastfeeding should not consume Bitter Melon because of increased risk of miscarriage and excess menstrual bleeding. If you have had recent surgery or lost blood for some reason, avoid Bitter Melon as it can cause dizziness or fainting.

Pears

I am blessed with a very productive pear tree in my backyard. Here is a recipe for a simple and tasty vegetarian soup made with pears and vegetables from the garden.

Vegetable and Pear Soup

Ingredients:

- 4 cups water
- 1 cup Udon noodles (or any type of noodle)
- 2 cups green beans, cut into 1" pieces
- 1 tomato (fresh and firm), cut into several pieces
- 1 carrot sliced thinly
- 1 medium pear (fresh and not too ripe), remove core and seeds, cut in several sections
- a few mint leaves
- a few mustard leaves
- 1 tablespoon mushroom soup base
- 1 teaspoon salt

Directions:

1. Heat water in pot
2. Add mushroom soup base and salt
3. Add Udon noodles
4. Add pear, tomato, carrot
5. Quickly stir-fry green beans in a pan with oil until partially cooked
6. Add cooked green beans to soup pot
7. Cook soup ingredients until pear and carrots are slightly soft
8. Serve soup in bowls, add mint leaves and mustard leaves
9. Add ground pepper or hot sauce if desired