



### **Asparagus and its benefits**

1. It's loaded with nutrients: Asparagus is a very good source of fiber, folate, vitamins A, C, E and K, as well as chromium, a trace mineral that enhances the ability of insulin to transport glucose from the bloodstream into cells.
2. This herbaceous plant—along with avocado, kale and Brussels sprouts—is a particularly rich source of glutathione, a detoxifying compound that helps break down carcinogens and other harmful compounds like free radicals. This is why eating asparagus may help protect against and fight certain forms of cancer, such as bone, breast, colon, larynx and lung cancers.
3. Asparagus is packed with antioxidants, ranking among the top fruits and vegetables for its ability to neutralize cell-damaging free radicals. This, according to preliminary research, may help slow the aging process.

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4. Another anti-aging property of this delicious spring veggie is that it may help our brains fight cognitive decline. Like leafy greens, asparagus delivers folate, which works with vitamin B12—found in fish, poultry, meat and dairy—to help prevent cognitive impairment. In a study from Tufts University, older adults with healthy levels of folate and B12 performed better on a test of response speed and mental flexibility. (If you're 50-plus, be sure you're getting enough B12: your ability to absorb it decreases with age.)
5. One more benefit of asparagus: It contains high levels of the amino acid asparagine, which serves as a natural diuretic, and increased urination not only releases fluid but helps rid the body of excess salts. This is especially beneficial for people who suffer from edema (an accumulation of fluids in the body's tissues) and those who have high blood pressure or other heart-related diseases.

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