

The Cruciferous Crew!



Hi, Boys and Girls! We're the Cabbage-Kids and we're the team leaders of the Cancer Fighting Team – **THE CRUCIFEROUS CREW!** We give you strength from the high mineral and vitamin content that we're made out of and we lower the risk of breast, stomach, colon and lung cancer. Cabbage is very high in **sulfur** and **iron**, which serve as cleaning agents for regions of your stomach and gastrointestinal tract. We also cleanse mucous membranes and wash out fatty deposits.

CRUCIFEROUS is a big word that stands for the leafy green vegetables: cabbage, spinach, broccoli, kale and lettuce. Our team is very important because we have the antioxidant **vitamins C, E** and **Beta-carotene**. Antioxidants are what fight cancer causing free radicals. Free radicals are produced in your body from sunlight, smoking, drinking alcohol or caffeine and pollutants.

Let us introduce you to the other members of our All-Star Team:



First is Brocco-Bite. His power source is **fiber**, which comes from broccoli, AND he's one of the richest sources of **vitamin A**. Two minerals that live in him are **indoles** and **isothiocyanates** (also called mustard oils). These are believed to act mainly by blocking cancer-causing substances before they reach their cellular targets. **Isothiocyanates** may also suppress tumor growth and both minerals lower the risk of breast, stomach and lung cancer. Ounce for ounce, broccoli has more **vitamin C** than an orange and as much **calcium** as a glass of milk. One medium spear has three times more **fiber** than a slice of wheat bran bread!



May we introduce the Green Let-Head. The healthy, low calorie content of lettuce makes him a dinner favorite. He comes in many different forms, such as, romaine, red leaf and green leaf. Regular consumption of **vitamin K**, found commonly in lettuce, has shown to reduce the chance of hip fractures in women, so let your mom know! When you eat several leaves of freshly washed lettuce, you absorb two vital minerals - **iron** and **magnesium**. These minerals enter your spleen, the abdominal organ under the ribs on your left side that helps protect your body from illness. Your spleen takes the **iron** and **magnesium** from the lettuce and supercharges these minerals. The minerals are then transported to cells and tissues to create a cleansing action. Another important nutrient your body needs is water. In fact, sixty-five percent of your body weight is water. Water keeps the moisture in the body, transporting oxygen to blood, and helps carry nutrients through blood. Eating lettuce is an excellent way you can get your recommended six to eight glasses of water a day because it contains this vital nutrient inside of its leaves.



Say hello to Spin. He is known throughout the world for the power that comes from within him, the power of spinach. Dark green leaves like spinach contain **lutein** and **zeaxanthin** -- phytochemicals that may protect your eyes as you age. Spinach is high in **beta-carotene** and this nutrient is believed to the lower risk for lung cancer. It seems that Popeye did have the right idea by popping open a can of spinach every day!



An often forgotten member of the team is the fantastic Kal-O-Man. He gets lots of **calcium** from kale, which is important for your growing bones. Next time you feel like all you want is a piece of chocolate, reach for some kale because nothing helps tame sugar cravings like it. These nutrient rich powerhouses help correct a mineral imbalance that can lead us around the house feeling like we need a dose of sweets. Rich in **vitamin A** and **beta-carotene**, kale is a great vegetable for you to try!

Altogether, **THE CRUCIFEROUS CREW** can help you have a healthy body and fight cancer. Go through what you just read and make sure that you know what the highlighted words mean and ask your teacher any questions that you might have about leafy green vegetables. After you've done that, come do a worksheet and take a quiz on what you just learned!