

The East London Garden Society

Plant Facts

Spirulina



Imagine a plant that can nourish your body by providing most of the protein you need to live, help prevent the annoying sniffing and sneezing of allergies, reinforce your immune system, help you control high blood pressure and cholesterol, and help protect you from cancer.

Does such a 'super food' exist?

Unlike plants you may grow in your garden, Spirulina is a miracle plant which is a form of blue-green algae that springs from warm, freshwater bodies.

Spirulina is a simple, one-celled organism that got its name from the Latin word for 'helix' or 'spiral' because of its spring-like physical characteristic. Its scientific name is *Arthrospira Platensis* and it belongs to the *Cyanobacteria* family.

The use of Spirulina as a food source dates all the way back to 9th century Chad and it is believed spirulina was used by the Aztecs in 16th century Mexico. Historical records report the harvesting and selling of cakes made from spirulina harvested from Lake Texcoco. It was rediscovered in the 1950's in the same place where it has said to have its origins by a European scientific mission. The Spirulina was being harvested and sold in dried flat cakes called dihé at the local markets where natives would use it as a staple for many of their meals.

If you have an autoimmune disease such as Crohn's disease, chronic fatigue syndrome, Lupus or fibromyalgia, chronic candida yeast can both cause and worsen your symptoms. Spirulina has been shown to encourage and support the growth of healthy bacterial flora in your gut which can help keep candida overgrowth under control.

If you suffer from seasonal or perennial allergies, you're not alone. Millions of people are allergic to pollen, ragweed, dust, mould, pet dander, and a myriad other environmental contaminant ensuring the makers of Kleenex will always stay in business!

In addition to being protein-rich, Spirulina is an excellent source of vital amino acids and minerals easily assimilated by your body. You would need to consume only two tablespoons of Spirulina as a protein substitute for a meal. It comes in capsules, tablets, powders and flakes. The recommended daily dose is typically between three to five grams. You can spread the dose out to twice or three times a day if you like and it is safe to take higher doses, but this is a good place to start. Remember to increase your intake of spring or filtered water when taking Spirulina to help it absorb into your system.

In addition to being your powerhouse of essential vitamins and minerals, Spirulina is a potent detoxifier. For that reason, it is best to start with a small dose and work your way up. Once you see how your body responds, you can then gradually increase your intake.

But where does this super food come from and how does it get made into the powder and tablet forms that are suitable for human consumption? Spirulina is a type of algae and it also happens to be one of the oldest life forms on Earth. Science has determined that Spirulina was actually responsible for producing much of the oxygen on the planet that allowed the earliest organisms to develop.

In its natural algae form, it can be found in many freshwater lakes, rivers, and ponds. It grows best in environments that have moderate temperatures and very high levels of sunlight.

The unique combination of the ultra-pure, deep ocean water and the fresh potable water enriches this particular strain of Spirulina with trace minerals, making it the most potent form of the super food available.