Swiss Chard

Swiss chard belongs to the family of beets and spinach and goes

by many different names, such as leaf beet, chard, seakettle beet, and spinach beet. It is one of the less common vegetables and yet has so many wonderful properties!

Chard is an excellent source of Vitamin K, which is essential in protecting against blood clots, as well as potassium, which helps with the body’s fluid and electrolyte balance. Chard is a wonderful source of vitamin A, vitamin C, and vitamin E – antioxidants that help protect against certain cancers. It is also a great source of fiber, iron, and calcium. Surprisingly, chard is high in sodium, which is rare for fresh vegetables. One cup of chard contains approximately 300 mg of sodium, so it is important to keep this in mind if on a sodium-restricted diet. See the table below for further nutrition information.

|  |
| --- |
| Nutrition Facts  Swiss chard, boiled,  Serving Size 1 cup |
| Amount Per Serving |
| Calories 35 Calories from Fat 1 |
| Total Fat 0g |
| Saturated Fat 0g |
| Cholesterol 0mg |
| Sodium 313mg |
| Total Carbohydrate 7g |
| Dietary Fiber 4g |
| Sugars 2g |
| Protein 3g |
| Vitamin A 214% Vitamin C 53% |
| Calcium 10% Iron 22% |

Although further research needs to be completed, lab studies have shown that some of chards nutritional properties can help regulate blood sugar levels – another great reason to eat this leafy green!

There are many easy ways to incorporate chard into your diet. The following list has some examples:

* Boil it, squeeze some lemon juice on it, and serve as a side dish
* Use in a salad or sandwich in place of lettuce
* Boil it and toss it into pasta
* May always be used in place of spinach, however chard cooks for a longer period of time
* \*\* For easy recipe ideas visit www.allrecipes.com \*\*

**Fresh Steamed Swiss Chard ©**

\*Healthy Directions of Poway Recipe\*

2 bunches of Swiss chard - any variety, washed & drained

Oil & Vinegar for garnish- I prefer a drizzle of aged Balsamic only.

Heat a large stockpot with 2 inches of water in bottom, or use whatever steamer pot you have. Insert steam basket. Tear leaves of chard from the ribs. Chop ribs into very small slices or dice. Place chopped ribs in bottom of steam pan. Chop leaves of chard in large shreds. Place on top of ribs in steam pan. Cover and cook until leaves are wilted and ribs soft, about 10 minutes, stirring once or twice. Check to see that there is water remaining in pan, but not above steam basket. Remove basket & drain chard. Serve with oil & vinegar.

Servings: 6 Per Serving (without garnish) of ½ cup: 18 calories, 2 gm protein, 3.5 gm carb., 0 fat, 0 cholesterol, 158 mg. sodium, 2 gm fiber and is a good source of vitamins A, C and Iron

NOTE**: Oil** has 130 calories and 14 gm of fat per tablespoon. **Vinegar** has 0 calories, fat, protein or carbohydrate, or sodium, except for **Balsamic** which has 8 calories and 2 gm of carbohydrate per tablespoon.

References

1. Swiss Chard. The Worlds Healthiest Foods Web site. Available at: http://whfoods.org/genpage.php?tname=foodspice&dbid=16. Accessed September 5, 2011.
2. Chard. University of Illinois Extension Web site. Available at: http://urbanext.illinois.edu/veggies/chard.cfm. Accessed September 5, 2011.
3. The Nutritional Value of Zucchini vs Swiss Chard. Live Strong Web site. Available at: http://www.livestrong.com/article/ 501715-the-nutritional-value-of-zucchini-vs-swiss-chard/. Accessed September 5, 2011.
4. Swiss chard, boiled. Nutridata Web site. Available at: http://nutritiondata. self.com/facts/vegetables-and-vegetable-products/2400/2. Accessed September 7, 2011.