

Watermelon, Tomato & Cucumber Salad with Chickpeas

Fresh, colourful and affordable – a perfect South African summer salad.

This refreshing salad combines seasonal fruit and vegetables with chickpeas for added fibre and plant protein. It is an easy way to add more plant foods to your diet without relying on expensive ingredients.

Serves 4-6

Ingredients:

Salad base:

- 4 cups ripe watermelon, cut into bite-sized cubes
- 3 medium ripe tomatoes, roughly chopped
- 1 large cucumber, sliced or cubed
- 1 × 410 g tin chickpeas, drained and rinsed
- ½ small red onion, thinly sliced
- A handful of fresh mint, torn
- A handful of fresh coriander, chopped - optional
- 60 g feta, crumbled - optional

For the lemon dressing:

- Juice of 1 large lemon
- 1½ tablespoons B-Well Canola or Extra virgin olive oil
- 1 small garlic clove, crushed
- ½ teaspoon black pepper
- A small pinch of salt

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Why these ingredients are good choices

Watermelon – A naturally sweet, refreshing fruit that contributes to your daily intake of fruit and vegetables. Choosing a variety of colourful plant foods is an important part of a healthy eating pattern.
Tomatoes – An inexpensive and versatile fruit that adds colour, flavour and important plant nutrients. Including different coloured vegetables helps increase the variety of nutrients in your diet.
Cucumber – Adds crunch and freshness while keeping the salad light and affordable, particularly welcome on a hot summer day.
Chickpeas – The nutritional powerhouse of this salad. Chickpeas are a source of dietary **fibre and plant protein**, and pulses such as chickpeas, beans and lentils are recommended as part of a diet that may help reduce the risk of some cancers.
Fresh herbs & lemon – Mint, coriander, lemon and garlic add plenty of flavour without needing a heavy, sugary or creamy dressing.





Method:

1. Place the watermelon, tomatoes, cucumber and chickpeas in a large bowl.
2. Add the red onion, mint and coriander.
3. Whisk together the lemon juice, oil, garlic and black pepper.
4. Pour over the salad just before serving and gently toss.
5. Scatter over the feta, if using.
6. Serve chilled or at room temperature.

Summer Tip: Add the dressing just before serving. Watermelon and cucumber release water, so dressing the salad too early can make it soggy.

The connection with lowering of cancer risk

There is no single food that prevents cancer. Instead, research supports an overall eating pattern rich in **vegetables, fruit, wholegrains and pulses**, while limiting processed meat, highly processed foods and sugary drinks.

The World Cancer Research Fund recommends making vegetables, fruit, wholegrains and beans or other pulses a major part of your usual diet. Higher fibre intake is also associated with a lower risk of colorectal cancer. CANSA recommends eating seasonal whole fruit and non-starchy vegetables, together with wholegrains and legumes.

The simple idea:

Don't look for a miracle food. Build meals around a variety of whole foods while prioritizing affordable plant foods.

Budget-friendly swaps:

Use what's **fresh, affordable and in season**. If watermelon isn't available or is expensive, try pawpaw, peaches, naartjies or another seasonal fruit.

You can also keep canned chickpeas in your pantry for quick, inexpensive meals.

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