

Wellness Articles

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If you would like to be added to the distribution list for these articles, please email: Rebecca.johnson2@albertahealthservices.ca. You will receive a monthly email containing articles for the upcoming four weeks.

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From broccoli to strawberries – growing nutritious food in your backyard or neighbourhood

It's surprising how many types of produce are grown in Alberta. We all know that vegetables and fruit are good for us; but have you thought to try to grow some yourself? Diets rich in vegetables and fruit have been associated with obesity and chronic disease prevention and improved overall health. Here are just a few examples of nutrient-packed vegetables and fruit that can be grown in your own backyard.

- **Strawberries:** These delicious bright red berries beat out other berries when it comes to vitamin C needed for immunity, healthy skin and gums.
- **Broccoli:** A type of cruciferous vegetable, this green vegetable can protect against certain cancers. They also are an excellent source of Vitamin C.
- **Spinach:** Leafy green with a mild taste that can be used in smoothies, omelettes or salad. Spinach has fibre and is a good source of vitamin A, C and K and folate. They also have plant chemicals like beta carotene, lutein and zeaxanthin which are important for eye health.
- **Carrots:** One medium-sized carrot supplies enough Vitamin A for an entire day. Carrots provide fibre and potassium and are a good source of vitamin C.
- **Tomatoes:** Red and round, tomatoes have many nutrients like potassium folate and vitamin B6. They also have an anti-oxidant called lycopene which is high in cooked tomatoes and has been linked to reduced risk of prostate cancer.

Do these health benefits inspire you to get growing? You can start your own backyard or balcony garden and it's not too late to sign up for a community garden. For information on how to start or join one, visit albertahealthservices.ca and search [Community Gardens Handbook](#).