

Spinach and curly kale contain fiber and prebiotics, which play a crucial role in gut health.

Here's why leafy greens are beneficial for gut health:

- **They nourish beneficial gut bacteria.** Spinach, curly kale, and arugula contain prebiotics, compounds that feed bacteria in the gut. Dr. Supriya Rao, a board-certified gastroenterologist and managing partner at *Integrated Gastroenterology Consultants*, explains that leafy greens contain a unique plant sugar called sulfoquinovose. It helps nourish beneficial gut bacteria and promotes a more balanced microbiome.
- **They increase gut microbiome diversity.** Leafy greens are rich in lutein, a compound that may also be beneficial for the microbiome.
- **They are packed with fiber.** Fiber supports healthy digestion, regulates blood glucose levels, and reduces the risk of heart disease. Leafy greens are rich in fiber, though exact amounts vary by vegetable. For instance, three cups of raw leafy cabbage contain 4 grams of fiber, kale 3 grams, and spinach, Swiss chard, or arugula 1 gram.
- **They support the gut-brain axis.** According to recent research, what benefits the gut may also be beneficial for the brain.

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