

THE CHEMISTRY OF SPINACH

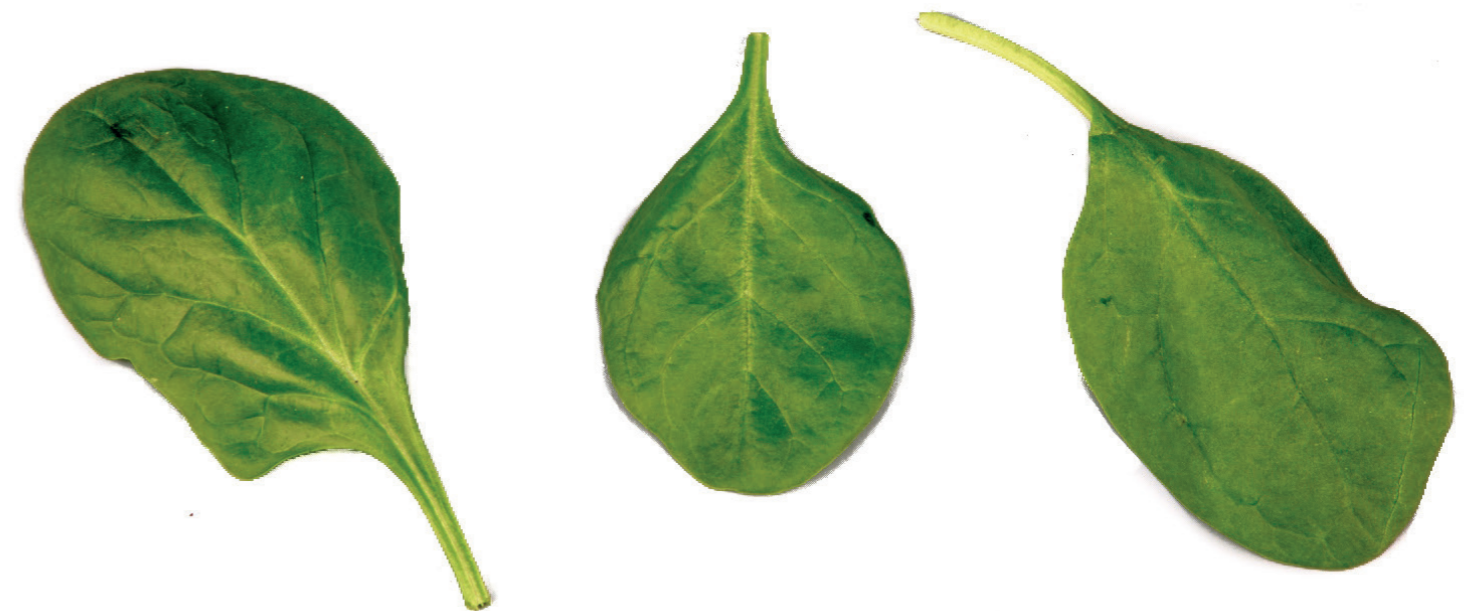
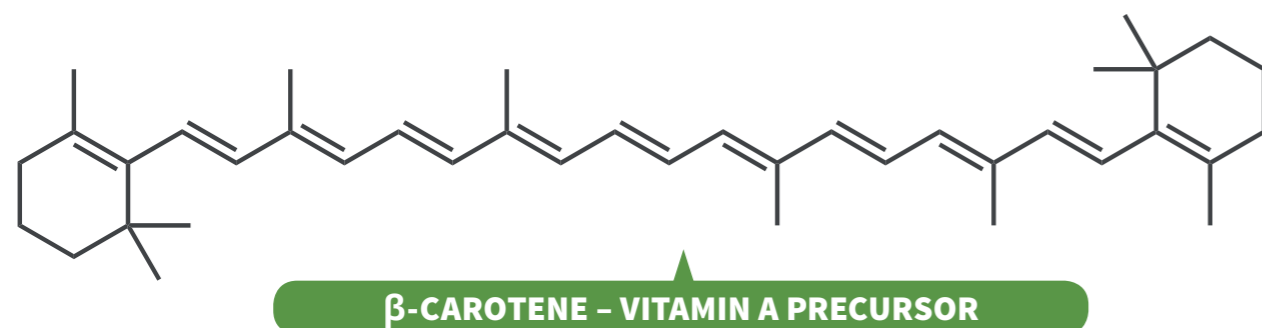
THE IRON CONTENT OF SPINACH

Compared to many other vegetables, spinach does have a higher iron content. However, iron in vegetables tends to have low bioavailability - that is, it is not easily absorbed in the body.

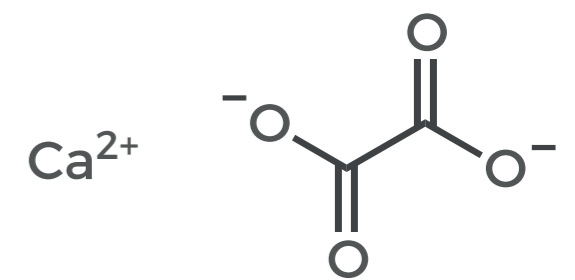
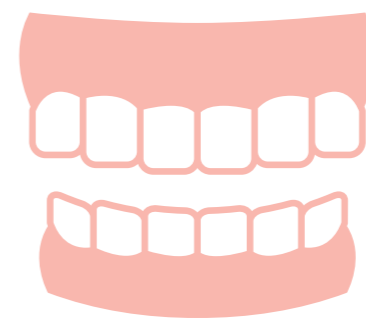
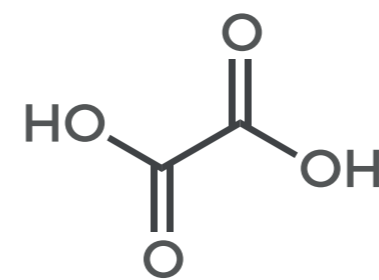


Sources: USDA food composition database; Scrimshaw (1991)

Low absorption of iron is partly due to polyphenol compounds in spinach binding iron - not due to its oxalic acid content (as previously thought). Though it might not be a great source of iron, it's a good source of vitamin A in the form of carotenoids.



WHAT CAUSES 'SPINACH TEETH'?



Spinach contains high amounts of oxalic acid. When you eat spinach, it can leave your teeth with a 'chalky' feel. This is caused by the oxalic acid reacting with the calcium ions in the spinach and in your saliva. This forms poorly soluble calcium oxalate crystals which coat your teeth.

