

The following information regarding Raw Cultured Vegetables and Young Coconut Kefir is extracted from Body Ecology Diet (BED) literature.

Raw Cultured Vegetables

“A weakened immune system has a diminished volume of enzymes due to high stress on the system by all the chemicals and microbes as well as diets lacking in enzymes. We get all our enzymes from food and ... the highest source of food enzymes re: soaked seeds, nuts and grains, and fermented fresh produce.” – Victorius Kulvinskas

How Raw Cultured Vegetables Work

The vegetables are cultured by grinding up cabbage (or a combination of cabbage and other vegetables) and leaving it in a sanitary environment at room temperature for at least four to six days. Friendly bacteria (microflora) that are naturally present in the vegetables quickly lower the pH, making a more acidic environment so that microflora (friendly bacteria) can colonize. By sanitary environment, we mean a large stainless steel stockpot or ceramic crock covered with cabbage leaves, a plate, and a heavy object to weight down vegetables, and then covered with a dishtowel. Room temperature means 60-70 degrees Fahrenheit, for about six days; depending on how you like the taste. Some connoisseurs say six days are ideal, others feel that only three are necessary. You can experiment and decide for yourself.

During this fermentation period, the friendly bacteria (microflora) are having a heyday, reproducing and converting sugars and starches to lactic acid. Once the initial process is over, it is time to slow down the bacterial activity by putting the cultured veggies in a glass jar with a tight-fitting lid and refrigerating it. The cold will not kill the activity, just slowdown the process to an appropriate rate.

Benefits?

Raw cultured veggies greatly enhance digestion (especially of protein and grains). Protein creates toxins in your intestines. The microflora magical alchemists that cultured veggies are, turn these toxins back into useful amino acids. Ideally, you should never eat animal protein, including eggs, without having a serving of cultured veggies on your plate too.

How Much Should I Make? And How Long is Their Shelf Live?

Try to make your sauerkraut in a quantity that you and your family will consume in about two to four weeks, so you'll always be able to eat it fresh. If you do not need to make it in bigger quantities and store it, that's okay too – just keep it cold and tightly covered. Properly made, it can have an eight month shelf life. If you have a friend on the Diet, try sharing the responsibility of making the sauerkraut and sharing the yield.

Get Creative!

Once you master the basic technique, be creative. Try different vegetable combinations, and include soaked, drained ocean vegetables like hijiki and arame. Use lemon juice, herbs (fresh or dried), seeds (dill or caraway), and juniper berries.

Tips for Eating Raw Cultured Vegetables

Include at least ½ cup of the veggies in any meal where you are eating a protein or starch. Use the juice in salad dressing as a replacement for the apple cider vinegar or lemon juice. You can also toss the veggies into salads, wrap them up in blue cornmeal tortilla, or serve them with crunchy blue corn chips.

Never heat the veggies, or the valuable enzymes and beneficial bacteria (microflora) will be killed. If you leave them out at room temperature for a while, they will come alive and start to multiply quickly. So sometimes when you open a jar, the veggies overflow and start bubbling out the top. This is good! It just means your batch is rich with viable bacteria (microflora) ready to go to work in your digestive tract and establish a new inner ecology.

Recipes

There is no one perfect way to make raw sauerkraut, but the secret is in using fresh, well-cleaned vegetables that taste good and are not too mature. They should be harvested when they are sweet, juicy, tender and delicious. Good cabbage, beets and carrots are sweet and full of many exciting flavors. Vegetables ferment as a result of beneficial bacteria (microflora) that are naturally present. Normally, the beneficial bacteria dominate and give you great tasting raw cultured vegetables. The cleaner the equipment and vegetables, the better. You do want to shake your vegetables after cleaning so as to have the least amount of water in the raw culturing vegetables.

Our Favorite Beginners Recipes

We like to add freshly squeezed lemon juice to our cabbage, because it tastes delicious and retains the beautiful color in the vegetables.

For every three heads of cabbage (we use 2 green cabbages and 1 red cabbage)

Combine ¾ to 1 cup
Freshly squeezed lemon juice and
3 Tbsp. Dried Dill weed

Put this mixture into a stainless steel bowl and beat it thoroughly with a blunt object. Put this into your crock or stainless steel stockpot and cover with at least two layers of cabbage leaves, the plate, and the heavy object. Find a cool spot in your home and let it sit for six days before

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unveiling it. Scrape off any foam or mildew from the top of edges, and refrigerate as above. Your batch, if you've made it correctly. Should be brightly colored, juicy and sweet.

BED Special Recipe

Ingredients and equipment:

- 1 Packet of Body Ecology's cultured vegetable starter
- 1 head organic red or green cabbage (or half a head of each)
- Other organic hard root vegetables (optional)
- Lemon Juice (optional)
- Fresh herbs
- A glass or stainless steel straight-sided jar or canister (must be airtight)

1. Discard the outer leaves of the cabbage, cut into sections and wash. Remove the stalk and slice the cabbage into shreds. (The easiest and quickest way is to use a food processor. Use the shredding disk.)
2. Place the shredded cabbage into a large bowl. Remove 2 cups of the shredded cabbage and place into a blender with enough filtered water to make a puree.
3. Add cultured vegetable starter to this puree and let it sit for 15 minutes. (Starter will become activated.)
4. Add the puree back into the rest of the shredded cabbage and mix well.
5. Place cabbage/cultured vegetable mixture into the jar or canister. Pack down well with your fist. Seal jar with airtight lid and place in a room temperature (72-75 degree) darkened corner until fermented. This will be from 3 to 6 days or perhaps even longer. (We have left them for as long as 14 days.) A layer of harmless mold will often form on the top. Simply scrape this off or it will spoil the flavor of your cultured vegetables. Place your cultured vegetables into an airtight container and refrigerate. The fermentation process will continue, but very slowly. Over time they will "age" like wine does becoming softer and even more delicious.
6. If using other vegetables such as carrot, turnips, garlic, scallions, or daikon, wash them well and peel if desired. If you use ocean vegetables, soak these in water first, then drain and chop. If desired, you can add one teaspoon of mineral-rich, natural sugar to the cultured puree. The bacteria will feed off of the sugar and not cause a problem if you have candida.

Young Coconut Kefir

How Young Coconut Kefir Came to be and How it Works

Americans have seen and tasted the meat and the milk of mature (brown, hairy) coconut; a green coconut is really the same food, but it is just younger. Sometimes the green outer shells are cut off before they are shipped to U.S. markets. Look for either a green shell or a white "husk" if the outer shell has been removed. You may not see them in the produce section of your big-chain supermarket, but they are readily available in Asian, Latino, and other ethnic or farmer's markets. Many health food stores will carry them upon request.

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Although the liquid of the young coconut has an abundance of minerals, the concern was that it would be too sweet. Drinking it would make the body too acidic and encourage the growth of pathogens and cancers. The idea to add Body Ecology's kefir starter to this liquid and "culture it" kept popping into Donna Gates' mind. It was clear that it would be a perfect medium for the growth of beneficial microflora. Soon the starter kit was created, and when added to the coconut water, and let to rest over a 24-hour period, all of the sugar disappeared. What remained was a fizzy, sour, champagne-like drink, like a spritzer.

Benefits?

1. It completely **stops your cravings for sugar**. Imagine the benefits of that?
2. It **aids digestion** of all foods.
3. **It has a tonifying affect on the intestines**, even flattening the abdomen!
4. **It appears to cleanse the liver**. In Chinese medicine, the liver rules the skin, eyes, and joints. **Coconut water kefir eases aches and joint pains**. Many people report having a prettier complexion. They experience the brown liver spots on the skin fading away and skin tags, moles, or warts drying up and disappearing. Vision also improves.
5. **It contains high levels of valuable minerals, including potassium, natural odium, calcium, and magnesium**, which explains why the hair, skin, and nails become stronger and have a prettier shine.
6. **It also appears to have a beneficial, cleansing effect on the endocrine system (adrenals, thyroid, pituitary, ovaries)**. Women find that their periods are cleaner and healthier; some who had experienced early menopause have reported that this important monthly cleansing returning again.
7. **It increases energy and gives you an overall feeling of good health**. Young green coconuts yield several delicious foods. You can ferment the water (not "coconut milk") into that delicious, healing kefir.

Ways to Enjoy Coconut Water Kefir

There are so many ways to utilize the young coconut kefir! A half cup with meals greatly helps digestion. You can add ginger, stevia, lemon, and/or lime if desired. A ½ cup at bedtime will establish a healthy inner ecosystem. Studies from Europe show that when you are lying still during sleep, the microflora produce faster. In the morning, combine ½ cup of the young coconut water with unsweetened cranberry or black currant juice, as a great wake-up tonic. Add in stage two of the BED, when you start introducing a little fruit for breakfast, the coconut kefir microflora will happily enjoy the sugar in the fruit and leave you with its vitamins and minerals.

If you are lactose intolerant because you do not have dairy-loving microflora thriving in your inner ecosystem, begin adding them by drinking the coconut water kefir and eating young coconut kefir "cheese". You'll soon find yourself enjoying kefir made from organic milk as well.

BED Special Recipe

1. Remove the 1-1/2 to 2 cups of water inside the young coconut and use it to make kefir. To do this, lay the coconut on its side and shave several layers off the bottom until a circle appears. If you keep on shaving, two more circles will appear and you'll have what looks like a face with 2 eyes and a mouth. Place the young coconut in your kitchen drain so that the point fits into the drain (This just holds the coconut steady). Take a sharp object like a carrot peeler, or apple corere and poke it through the bigger (mouth) hole. Rout out the hole, making it bigger, and then flip the coconut over onto a glass jar to let the water pour out.
2. Use the water from about four coconuts with one package of starter. Let it sit on the counter for 24-48 hours, and you're all set.
3. You'll know it's done when the color changes to a milky white, and usually there is a bit of bubbling or foam on top. This means all the sugar has been removed. When you drink it, make sure its tastes tart and tangy. This is another sign that all the sugar is gone.
4. Special Notes: You can use about ¼ cup from your first batch to transfer the friendly bacteria to your next batch of kefir. Do this up to seven times with one package of tarter. When the weather turns cold, warm the liquid to about 90 degrees before adding the starter. Then place the glass jar into an insulated container so that it will maintain a steady temperature of about 70 degrees while fermenting.

Kefir Cheese Recipe

You can also eat the very special meat. Soft, pudding-like, and technically a seed, this meat is high in protein, enzyme-rich, and very easy to digest. Like all seeds and nuts, it is a protein fat, but this seed provides an excellent source of lauric and caprylic fatty acids. You can scoop the meat out of the shell and eat it raw, or you can put it in a blender with enough water to make it the same consistency of guacamole and then ferment. Just add the BED kefir starter, and in 24 hours, you'll have a sort of kefir "cheese" a fabulous fermented base for salad dressings, dips or just plain eating as is. It's like eating yogurt, only dairy-free.