

RECIPE for health

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Featured Food: **TURNIPS**



By Peggy Crum, RD, Health4U Nutritionist

Michigan has two turnip seasons. Thanks to cool temperatures in the spring and fall, turnips thrive twice a year. Spring is ideal for turnip greens and early tender turnips but warm temperatures can threaten the turnip bulb making the texture woody and the flavor harsh. The fall crop, often larger and better quality, provides plenty of turnips to store for winter use.

Turnips and rutabagas are underground members of the brassica (cabbage) family. The orb-shaped part of the plant may look like a root but it is really a swollen lower stem. While turnips are white-fleshed and rutabagas yellow, these vegetables substitute well for each other in cooking.

Turn up the deliciousness by shopping for small- to medium-size turnips with a rosy red or purple blush on smooth white skin. Young turnips are sweet and tender with a mild peppery flavor. The tops should be fresh and green. Yellow tops or bolting (spouts coming from the cut-off tops) are sure signs of tough, bitter turnips. If the tops are gone, the turnips most likely were in storage before coming to market. Cold storage turnips are fine if they are firm and heavy for size. Store yours, separate from the greens, unwashed in a plastic bag in the refrigerator for a week or two.

How you use your turnips will depend on their size and maturity. The smallest ones just need a thorough washing in clear water before steaming them whole with the tops attached. Tender medium-size turnips can be used raw, cut up for dipping or shredded for slaw as in our featured recipe. Larger turnips require peeling then roasting, steaming or braising to soften their flavor to a gentle spiciness.

Turnips pair well with potatoes to make a classic combination. Or toss chunks of turnips and other fall vegetables with olive oil and roast in a hot oven until nicely browned.

Turnip Slaw

Recipe developed by Corporate Chef Kurt Kwiatkowski and featured in Residential Dining Services.

4-6 Servings

- 1 pound (3 to 4 medium) turnips
- ¼ cup diced red pepper
- ¼ cup bias cut chiffonade green onion
- 2 Tablespoon chopped fresh cilantro
- ¼ cup Greek yogurt
- 1 Tablespoon sugar
- Salt and pepper to taste

bias cut chiffonade: to finely slice while holding the knife at an angle to the item being cut to make elongated, oval-shaped shreds.

Wash turnips thoroughly in clear water. Remove the greens leaving enough of the stems for grasping. Peel the turnips then use a grater to shred the turnips into a large bowl. Toss with peppers, onions and cilantro.

In a small bowl, whisk together yogurt, sugar, salt and pepper. Pour dressing over vegetable mixture and toss to combine.

Refrigerate for at least ½ hour. Taste before serving; adjust salt and pepper as needed.

Turnip Slaw will be served for lunch at Brody Square, The Gallery at Snyder-Phillips and Riverwalk Market on November 16.

Visit www.eatatstate.com for dining hall hours and menus.