

## Longevity Spinach - *Gynura Procumbens*

So named because eating this green regularly promotes a long and healthy life. Also called Vietnamese spinach, Moluccan spinach, Sambung nyawa, and Daun dewa.

This low-growing, semi-succulent, perennial plant creeps along the ground as a bright green tropical ground cover but can also be nicely contained in a pot for a window sill garden. Commonly grown in Asian countries, it is said that eating a few leaves a day will lower blood pressure and blood sugar in diabetics but not affect normal blood sugar levels in non-diabetics.

Has also been clinically shown to lower blood cholesterol and triglycerides, as well as having anti-inflammatory and antiviral properties. This tasty plant protects against ulcers as well as helping existing lesions heal. It is even said to protect kidney cells from kidney disease. Additionally, its high flavonoid content induces cancer cell death (apoptosis), inhibits new blood vessel growth that tumors need to survive (antiangiogenesis), and neutralizes free radicals. While there may be no clinical trial that has proven this, there are hundreds of years of anecdotal testament as to its effectiveness.

Longevity spinach can be eaten raw in salads, smoothies or on sandwiches as a super nutritious lettuce replacement. Very versatile as a cooked green it can be easily added to soups or stir fries. As younger leaves are more tender harvest and trim back regularly.

This tasty nutritious plant is useful as a year round green in the Keys even in the humid heat of summer. While *Gynura procumbens* can be grown in full sun, studies show that the greens are more nutritious if grown in shade or partial shade. Since it is a tender plant, it is hardy in USDA zones 10-11. In colder zones keep cuttings for next year or overwinter indoors. This wonder does not seem to be bothered by pests, and thankfully not at all attractive to iguanas.

Harvest tender greens by picking individual leaves or cutting 6 to 12 inch growing tips. Pick off the leaves, wash and enjoy. Stems are a crunchy addition to salads. To propagate, I preserve a few leaves on top of the cut branch and put the bare end of denuded branches in water... within 2 weeks

there will be roots and it's ready to be planted..keep it well watered and in shade for a few days to help it bounce back. Its ready to share.

Health Note: As many leafy greens can be high in oxalic acid you may have heard to avoid foods high in oxalates. Besides significant phyto-nutrients, *Gynura procumbens* has much lower oxalate levels than conventional spinach.

If you have health issues, you should definitely consult with your doctor and/or nutritionist before deciding what is right for you. In any case, to reduce the oxalic acid content in all leafy greens simply blanch them before eating which can reduce oxalate content by up to 90%. Remember to discard the water after blanching.

Please Read our [Health Disclaimer](#) here



Bathtub planted with Longevity Spinach and Katuk