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Question: How to use an entire bundle of parsley? And to extend its shelf life?

Answer: We are not always able to snip fresh herbs from our garden or countertop and often buy a big bunch of fresh parsley for a recipe. Instead of just throwing it in the produce drawer and finding it days later, taking the time to store it properly will extend its shelf life for up to two weeks.

Start with parsley as fresh as possible. Keeping your parsley wrapped in a damp paper or kitchen towel in the refrigerator will keep it fresh for a few days. Treating the parsley much like a bunch of flowers will keep it fresh longer. Trim the stems slightly, and without washing place the bundle in a container filled with about 1 inch of water. Cover the container loosely with a plastic bag and store in the refrigerator. Change the water every couple of days or when it looks murky. Rinse the stems and leaves as needed and pat dry in paper towels.

You can also freeze parsley leaves by washing and drying leaves and placing in ice cube trays, covering gently with water or olive oil. Once it's frozen store in freezer containers. Parsley is great for use in soups or sauces but not suitable for garnish as the leaves will turn limp. The washed and dried leaves can also be placed flat on a tray, frozen and then stored in a freezer container.

Parsley is nutritionally packed so it is important to find ways to use it. Add parsley leaves to a salad and brighten up any soup, adding just before serving. Chopped parsley adds a wonderful freshness to a simple salad dressing, mayonnaise or scrambled eggs. The chlorophyll in parsley also makes it perfect to add to your "green" smoothie instead of spinach or kale. Parsley has a mild flavour and combines easily with all other herbs.

We Can Help! is a weekly column from ATCO Blue Flame Kitchen. Do you have a cooking or household question you'd like the ATCO Blue Flame Kitchen Answer Line to help you with? Call us toll-free at 1-877-420-9090 Monday to Friday, from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m., or send us an email at bfkanswerline@atcogas.com. For our searchable database of kitchen-tested recipes, along with household tips and expert advice, visit our website at www.atcoblueflamekitchen.com