

Vary your veggies



Eating vegetables provides important health benefits. People who eat more fruits and vegetables as part of an overall healthy diet are likely to have a reduced risk of some chronic diseases. Vegetables provide nutrients vital for health and maintenance of your body.

Veggie subgroups

Any vegetable or 100 percent vegetable juice counts as a member of the vegetable group. Vegetables may be raw or cooked, fresh, frozen, canned, or dried/dehydrated, and may be whole, sliced, or mashed.

Vegetables are divided into five subgroups based on their nutrient content. Here are a few examples from each subgroup:

- Dark green vegetables – bok choy, broccoli, kale, spinach, dark green leafy lettuce
- Orange vegetables – acorn squash, carrots, pumpkin, sweet potatoes
- Dry beans and peas – black beans, black-eyed peas, garbanzo beans, kidney beans, soy beans, tofu
- Starchy vegetables – corn, green peas, lima beans, potatoes
- Other vegetables – asparagus, beets, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, celery, cauliflower, cucumbers, green beans, okra, onions, tomatoes, turnips, zucchini



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15 tips to add veggies to your meal plan



1. Try buying fresh vegetables in season—they cost less and are likely to be at their peak flavor.
2. Stock up on frozen vegetables for quick and easy cooking in the microwave.
3. Add a green salad with your dinner each night.
4. Top off sandwiches with lettuce, tomatoes and other fresh favorites.
5. Shred carrots or zucchini into casseroles, quick breads and muffins.
6. Make an omelet with your favorite veggies folded inside.
7. Use pureed, cooked vegetables, such as potatoes, to thicken stews, soups and gravies. They'll add flavor, nutrients and texture.
8. Pick up pre-washed bags of salad greens and add baby carrots or grape tomatoes for a salad in minutes.
9. Snack on raw broccoli, carrots, red and green peppers, celery sticks and cauliflower with a low-fat dip or dressing.
10. Substitute black or pinto beans for meat in tacos and burritos.
11. Garnish grilled chicken or fish with vegetable salsas.
12. Use your microwave to quickly cook vegetables for dinner.
13. Prepare baked potatoes as a main dish. Use toppings like salsa, chopped broccoli or a vegetarian chili.
14. Plan a meal using a vegetable main dish, such as vegetable lasagna or soup.
15. Chop up veggies and add them to pasta sauce or as pizza toppings.

Make it a goal to eat more dark green and orange veggies as well as dried peas and beans every day. You'll not only get more variety, but your vitality will get a healthy kick, too.