

5 delicious ways to Pick Vegetables with the Most Nutrition

Vegetables are packed with great taste and good nutrition. But most Americans are missing out on the full nutrition benefits. That's because most of us don't eat enough vegetables. Kids need 1 cup of veggies a day. Adults need a total of 2½ to 3 cups daily. Here's how to get vegetable power in your life.

1. Choose fresh vegetables.

Fresh vegetables are a super choice. They are especially good if they are in season and locally grown. To retain nutrients, enjoy fresh veggies raw. If you cook them, cook them quickly. Make a salad with your favorites. Start with leafy lettuce, spinach or cabbage. Add sliced carrots, peppers, cucumber and tomatoes. Top with chopped broccoli florets or pea pods.



2. Choose frozen vegetables.

When fresh vegetables cost a lot or are hard to find, try frozen! Frozen broccoli, peas, green beans or edamame (green soybeans) are excellent choices. Buy large bags. Take out just what you need for a meal. Seal the bag tightly and put it back in the freezer. You'll save money, because the extra won't spoil. To cook, microwave for a few minutes, quickly mix into a stir-fry, or add to casseroles and soups.

3. Choose canned vegetables.

Canned vegetables don't cost a lot and can be a good source of the nutrients you need. Tomatoes, pumpkin and beans are really good choices. Canned tomatoes are perfect in sauces and soups. They even come in roasted and flavored varieties. Canned pumpkin goes great in breads and muffins. Beans – like black, navy or pinto – are very versatile veggies.

4. Choose dried vegetables.

Get creative with sun-dried tomatoes. They are a tasty addition to many recipes! They can add flavor to a pasta dish or color to hummus – a dip made with mashed chickpeas. “Legumes” are peas, beans and lentils. Whether you buy them canned or dried, they are nutrition at its best and don't cost a lot. Add legumes to soups and casseroles, as well as salads and dips.

5. Choose 100% vegetable juice.

Vegetable juice can be refreshing and rich in nutrients. If you have a juicer, you can make your own from fresh vegetables. You can also buy prepared juice. Choose brands that are low in sodium and say “100% juice.” Remember, no juice will give you as much fiber as whole vegetables.