



## VARY YOUR VEGGIES

# Why Eat Vegetables?

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### Rate Your Vegetable Use:

How many vegetables do I include daily in my diet?

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Four ways I prepare vegetables are...

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Six vegetables I frequently use in my home are...

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If liquid is left on my cooked vegetables, I...

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Vegetables are versatile, nutritious, colorful and flavorful. Not only do they not contain cholesterol, are naturally low in calories, fat and sodium, but they also are good sources of important vitamins, minerals and dietary fiber. Increasing vegetable consumption can replace foods higher in calories and fat.

Vegetables are rich sources of vitamins, particularly A and C. The value of a vegetable as a source of a nutrient is affected both by the amount of the nutrient present and by the amount of the vegetable eaten.

Carrots, leafy green vegetables and sweet potatoes are good sources of vitamin A. Likewise, peppers and tomatoes are good sources of vitamin C. On the other hand, potatoes, while lower in vitamin C, also are a good source of the nutrient because large amounts of potatoes are eaten. Other vegetables are good sources of folic acid, niacin, thiamin, vitamin B-6, minerals (such as calcium and potassium) and fiber. (See Table 1.)

### Cooking Tips

Three R's for cooking vegetables for best nutrition:

- **Reduce** the amount of water used.
- **Reduce** the cooking time.
- **Reduce** the amount of exposed surface by limiting cutting, paring and shredding.

Overcooking will destroy color, crispness (texture) and some nutrients of the vegetable. Do not add baking soda to retain color because this will destroy nutrients.



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# Table 1. Nutrient-rich Veggies: What Are the Good Sources?

	A <sup>1</sup>	C <sup>1</sup>	Folic Acid <sup>1</sup>	Niacin <sup>1</sup>	Thiamin <sup>1</sup>	B6 <sup>1</sup>	Magnesium <sup>1</sup>	Iron <sup>1</sup>	Calcium <sup>1</sup>	Potassium <sup>2</sup>	Dietary Fiber <sup>3</sup>
Artichoke, globe (french)		X	X				X			X	X
Asparagus		XXX	X							X	
Beans, dried, cooked			X				X	X		XX	X
Beans, green or yellow		X									X
Beets			X								X
Broccoli	X	XXX	X				X		X		X
Brussels sprouts		XXX	X								X
Cabbage, Chinese or green		XX									X
Carrots	XXX										X
Cauliflower		XXX	X							X	
Chard	X	X					X			XX	
Collards	X	X									
Corn			X		X					X	
Endive, chicory, romaine, escarole	X	X	X								
Kale	XXX	XXX									
Kohlrabi		XXX									
Mushrooms				X						X	
Okra		X	X				X				X
Onion		X									
Peas		X	X		X					X	X
Peas, split, cooked			X		X		X	X		XX	X
Peppers, sweet red	XX	XXX									
Peppers, sweet green		XXX									
Plantain	X	XXX				XX	X			XXX	
Potatoes, with skin		XX		X		X				XXX	X
Pumpkin	X	X								XX	
Radishes, 6 large		X									
Rutabagas		XX								X	
Snow peas		XXX									
Spinach, cooked	XXX	X	XX			X	X	X	X	XX	X
Spinach, raw	X	X	X								
Squash, summer, yellow		X									
Squash, winter		X								XXX	X
Sweet potato	XXX	XXX				X				XX	X
Tomatoes	X	XX								X	
Turnip greens	XXX	X	X						X		
Watercress		X									

<sup>1</sup>A selected serving contains (X) 10 to 24 percent of the U.S. recommended daily allowance (RDA) for adults and children more than 4 years old, (XX) 25 to 39 percent of the U.S. RDA for adults and children more than 4 years old, (XXX) 40 percent of the U.S. RDA for adults and children more than 4 years old.

<sup>2</sup>A selected serving contains at least + 200 to 349 milligrams.

<sup>3</sup>A single serving size contains at least 2 grams of dietary fiber.

