

Benefits of Eating Vegetables

Vegetables are an important part of our diets but can sometimes be hard to incorporate into our meals. Many people have strong preferences about the vegetables they like and the ones that they do not like. That is okay! Eat according to your tastes and preferences. There are so many vegetables to choose from that you are bound to find some that you like.

Below is a table with the different categories of vegetables and some examples of each category. Each vegetable example is hyperlinked to a recipe using that vegetable. Another column is also provided in the table if you would like additional suggestions on what dishes these vegetables can be used in.

Categories of Vegetables and Examples¹:

Category	Benefits	Examples	Other Suggestions on How to Use
Dark Green²	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Vitamin A ❖ Vitamin C ❖ Vitamin E ❖ Vitamin K ❖ B Vitamins ❖ Helps to prevent Osteoporosis ❖ Reduces risk of Inflammatory Diseases ❖ Good Source of Antioxidants 	Spinach Kale Cilantro Broccoli	Salad, Sauteed with Eggs, Soup, Smoothies, Dressings, Garnishes, Steamed, Roasted, Casseroles
Red and Orange³	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Decreases your risk of cancers ❖ Decreases risk of Cataracts ❖ Decreases risk of Hip Fractures 	Carrots Bell Peppers Tomatoes Pumpkin	Salad, Soup, Roasted, Steamed, Hummus, Sandwiches, Sauteed with Eggs
Beans, Peas, and Lentils⁴	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Fiber ❖ Folate ❖ Potassium ❖ Protein ❖ Iron ❖ Zinc 	Black Beans Kidney Beans Edamame Chickpeas	Burrito, Soup, Green Salad, Quinoa Salad, Hummus, Curries

Starchy ^{5,6}	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Fiber ❖ Potassium ❖ Vitamin C ❖ Vitamin B6 ❖ Prevents Scurvy 	Corn Green Peas Potatoes Yams	Soup, Side, Bread, Salad, Roasted, Steamed
Other ⁷	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❖ Fiber ❖ Vitamin A ❖ Vitamin C ❖ Folate ❖ Potassium 	Cucumber Avocado Cauliflower Snow Peas	Salad, Pickles, Sandwiches, Guacamole, Tacos Roasted, Steamed, Riced, Soups, Sauteed

Vegetables are a great source of fiber, vitamins, and even protein.⁸ They are also vital for helping to prevent cancer and other diseases.⁶ By incorporating vegetables into our diets, we are preventing future health problems and are providing our bodies with the vitamins and fiber that they need to function.

It is important that we get around 2-4 cups of vegetables per day.⁷ We don't have to make complicated recipes in order to eat more vegetables. It can be as simple as opening a can of green beans to eat with your dinner or mixing up a salad kit to have with lunch. If you would like more ideas, here are some tips for including more vegetables:

- Add sauteed veggies to your morning eggs or toast.
- Add a salad as a side to your dinner.
- Cut up veggies and serve them with a dip like hummus.
- Add leafy greens to your smoothies.
- Add sliced veggies like tomatoes or cucumber to your sandwich.
- Buy frozen or canned vegetables for a quick and more affordable option.
- Plan recipes for the week that include the same vegetables to save money.

Side Salad for One on a Budget:



Ingredients:

- One Handful of Spring Mix
- 3 Baby Carrots
- 3 Slices Cucumber, cut in half
- 1 Slice Tomato, diced into cubes
- 1 tsp Olive Oil
- 1 tsp Lemon Juice
- 0.5 tsp Balsamic Vinegar
- Salt and Pepper to taste

Directions:

1. Prepare all vegetables.
2. Assemble Salad in the bowl or on the plate that it will be served:
 - a. Place greens in bowl first.
 - b. Add the rest of the prepared vegetables.
3. Drizzle olive oil, lemon juice, balsamic vinegar, and salt and pepper on top of the salad.
4. Mix well and serve.

Sources:

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