



# 10 Ways to Eat More Vegetables

**M**eals packed with fresh vegetables add lots of vitamins and minerals to your diet while also providing you with plenty of fiber and antioxidants to feel your best. Sometimes it's difficult to get enough daily doses of these nutrient-dense foods without forcing yourself to eat a salad at every meal. Here are some delicious and creative ways to sneak more veggies into your diet.

## **Substitute greens for grains.**

You may be used to grilled chicken with a side of pasta or roasted salmon on top of a bed of rice. What if, for at least one meal a day, you substitute that pile of grains for a cup of your favorite greens? You can steam or braise them, or even eat them raw as a salad. It's a great way to get an extra dose of vitamins and minerals every day.

## **Spiralize it.**

That's right. Turn those veggies into "noodles." Zucchini, beets, carrots and sweet potatoes are among the many vegetables that easily transform into noodles with the right tools. This is great because for almost any pasta recipe, you can swap out the pasta for a vegetable so delicious you'll forget the original instructions ever called for pasta at all!

## **Get your frittata on.**

There's no better way to start the day than with a dose of veggies in your morning eggs. You can use fresh ones, or you can work with leftovers from the night before, stirring them into a breakfast scramble. Get creative! I've never come across a vegetable that wasn't tasty inside a frittata.

## **Hide veggies in sauce.**

While there's always a place on your plate for whole, gorgeous veggies, there's no harm in sneaking extras into sauces and soups. Carrots, broccoli, cauliflower and many others tuck nicely inside a sauce, adding an interesting and delicious flavor profile. Don't worry – when you use the right amounts, you won't even notice they're there.

## **Rethink your plate.**

Counter to what the food pyramid may have taught you, fresh vegetables should be the foundation of any meal. Try to aim for vegetables on 50-75% of your plate. The rest of your plate should be made up of a high-quality protein and healthy fat. Bonus points if your fat source is plant-based, like avocado.

## **Double up.**

Making a hearty soup or stew? Double the amount of vegetables that the recipe calls for. This will shift the proportions of the meal (remember, we're shooting for that 50-75% veggie range), without changing the flavor of the dish.

## **Pack some snacks.**

Think sliced bell peppers, fresh snap peas, baby carrots, sliced cucumber and cherry tomatoes. All of these go great with plant-based dips like hummus, guacamole and baba ghanoush.

## **Get in on the cauliflower craze.**

Are you a grain fanatic looking for ways to cut back on starchy carbs? Cauliflower is a great substitute for rice, mashed potatoes and more! This vegetable is so versatile, you can even make a tasty pizza crust with it.

## **Reinvent the sandwich.**

Who says you have to wrap your lunch meat with bread?! There are many other substitutes that not only add vegetables, but flavor and texture, too. Try stacking sliced meat, veggies and condiments between two red bell pepper halves. Lettuce works well, too. If you're looking for something heartier, two slices (each about one inch thick) of baked sweet potato make a hearty and satisfying "bun" replacement.

## **Yes, you can still have lasagna.**

Thinly sliced zucchini and eggplant are great substitutes for lasagna noodles in any recipe. Try layering these with your favorite marinara sauce and cheese. You could even go the extra mile by hiding some extra veggies in the sauce.

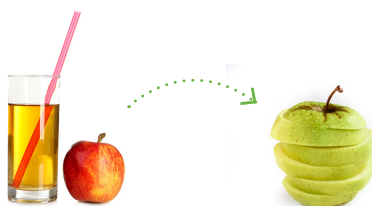
# 5 Simple **Food Swaps** for a Healthier Diet

By Trinh Le, MPH, RD

Becoming a healthier you doesn't have to happen overnight! Get there one simple swap at a time. Here are five swaps for you to make the most out of your food...

## **APPLE JUICE** (1 CUP)

113 calories  
27g carbs  
0.7g fiber  
22g sugar



## **FRESH APPLES** (1 CUP)

57 calories  
15g carbs  
2.6g fibers + **2X the fiber**  
11g sugar - **8tsp less sugar**

## **SUGARY CEREAL** (1 CUP)

109 calories  
25g carbs  
2.7g fiber  
12g sugar



## **HEARTY OATMEAL** (1 CUP)

166 calories  
28g carbs  
4g fiber + **1.5X the fiber**  
0.6g sugar - **2.8 tsp less sugar**

## **MARGARINE** (1 TBSP)

101 calories  
11g fat  
2g trans fat  
77% unsat. fat



## **AVOCADO** (1 TBSP)

23 calories - **4x the calories**  
2g fat + **More healthy fats**  
0g trans fat - **Less unhealthy fats**  
85% unsat. fat

## **ICEBURG LETTUCE**

scores 18\*  
out of 100 for  
Nutrient Density



## **LEAFY GREENS**

Spinach scores 86\*  
Romaine scores 63\* + **Vitamins**  
Kale scores 49\* & **minerals**

## **VANILLA ICE CREAM** (1/2 CUP)

137 calories  
7g fat  
0.5g fiber  
14g sugar  
131mg potassium



## **RIPE FROZEN BANANA** (1/2 CUP)

100 calories  
0g fat  
3g fiber + **6X the fiber**  
14g sugar  
403mg potassium + **3X the potassium**

All nutrition information is calculated using the USDA Nutrient Database, Standard Release 28. Accessed March 20, 2017. Link: <https://ndb.nal.usda.gov/ndb/search/list>

\*Di Noia J. Defining Powerhouse Fruits and Vegetables: A Nutrient Density Approach. Prev Chronic Dis 2014;11:130390. DOI: <http://dx.doi.org/10.5888/pcd11.130390>





# What's the Right Portion Size?

By Erin McCarthy, MS, RD

Here are a few ways to eyeball portion sizes that will help you keep slim and trim as well as get in the right amount of nutrients from your meals.

## Portion Sizes for Vegetables

When having raw vegetables such as broccoli, a cup's worth will equal the size of a baseball. If you're cooking your veggies, then a half cup equals the size of a lightbulb or a billiard ball.



## Portion Sizes for Whole Grains

The serving size for most cooked grains is about half a cup. This approximately equates to the size of a billiard ball.



## Serving Sizes for Fruit

Serving sizes for fruits are based on 15 grams of carbohydrate per serving. A serving of dried fruit amounts to 1/4 cup, which is about the size of an egg. Meanwhile, a serving of fresh fruit is the equivalent of one medium whole fruit such as an apple, 3/4 cup of berries like blueberries or roughly 18 grapes.

## Portion Sizes for Meat

A serving size of meat equals 3 ounces. If you're a meat eater, chicken and fish should be your first two choices whenever possible. If you want to eyeball how much to put on your plate, then shoot for a portion of meat that's about the size of a deck of cards or a smart phone.



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