

Vegetables: Nature's Weight Control Tool

Struggling to Reach Your Weight Management Goals? Have no fear! Nature's weight control tool is just a plate away!

With Vegetables You Can...

Eat Mindfully to Feel Fuller

The fiber in vegetables requires extra chewing, and eating slower can help you be mindful of flavors and textures. Fiber can be your best friend when you're watching portions because it helps you feel full and stay full longer. The "chewability" of veggies can slow down your eating which can help you eat less and enjoy your food more.

- Try adding a cup of cooked squash to your plate and you will get about 10-20% of your recommended daily fiber and a powerhouse of nutrients.

Curb Cravings with Fewer Calories

When it comes to weight management, choosing foods that are juicy and water-rich, such as vegetables and fruit, is a great low-calorie solution to any craving. Fill up on fresh vegetables which are loaded with valuable nutrients but few calories.

- Look no further than your simple salad greens for a low-cal addition to meals. Fill your bowl with a few handfuls of greens and you'll be enjoying about 1/10th as many calories as a typical sandwich.

Enhance Flavor and Nutrition of Classic Dishes

Ever notice that mushrooms have a bit of the hearty, savory taste of meat? Use them and other veggies as partial substitutes for meats in recipes to increase meal volume and pack in more fiber to keep you feeling full.

- Try mixing chopped mushrooms with ground beef or turkey in your next meal to keep the flavor while cutting the fat and calories.

Add Color To Your Plate

The beautiful colors of veggies aren't just for looks —they are indicators of illness-preventing "phytochemicals" that keep you healthy and able to be more active (another vital part of the weight management puzzle).



Enjoy a Rainbow of Vegetables

Keep meals exciting by adding a variety of vegetables to your plate. Color your plate with the different flavors and textures of green, blue, white, red and yellow veggies.

Red/Oranges

Household favorites, these colors are some of the most common, such as carrots and tomatoes. Switch it up with peppers or pumpkin to add a new flair to meals or snacks.

Greens

This color is easy to find but try to expand the variety. Chop broccoli for snacks and make your salads with different leafy greens like spinach, romaine and arugula. Try adding a fun green color to your smoothies with kale.

Whites/Browns

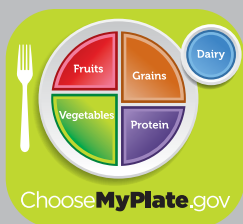
With many varieties, versatile mushrooms might be the best way to add this color to your plate for any meal of the day. But don't forget about turnips and cauliflower—like mushrooms, their neutral color makes them easy to finely dice and include in many dishes.

Yellow

Toss yellow peppers into any salad. A new variety of squash might be the perfect addition to dinner tonight. Try spaghetti squash instead of pasta and see if your family likes the calorie-cutting change.

Blues/Purples

Eggplant absorbs just about any flavor, making it an easy addition or base to delicious meals. Purple asparagus, cabbage, beets and peppers liven up plates both by sight and taste.



Keep it Real

Two key parts of weight control, balancing meals and eating smaller portions, are easier when vegetables are included in every meal. Picture the real thing by using USDA's MyPlate. USDA recommends making half of our plates fruits and vegetables. Here are some ways to build a healthy plate with veggies:

- **Think ahead.** Carrots, grape tomatoes and sliced bell peppers make an easy grab-and-go snack or can be a quick addition to an on-the-go meal.
- **Partner with fruits.** Fruits and veggies are old friends who really work well together. Try pomegranate seeds or pears in your salad greens or chop a pineapple to add to traditional tomato salsa and serve on fish or chicken.
- **Double up the veggies.** Have a side salad plus cooked vegetables with dinner. Remember to plan ahead by including a variety of vegetables on your grocery list and then fill up half of your cart with them too!
- **Swap an ingredient.** Try a recipe for eggplant parmesan or substitute vegetables for a portion of the meat in favorite recipes like beef and mushroom meatballs. Experiment with new vegetable recipes today.
- **Mix it all together.** Busy families love one pot meals. Use veggies for an easy way to add substance, flavor and fiber to the meal. Challenge yourself to see how many veggies you can add.

Weight Management

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