

12 Delicious, Easy Ways to Enjoy Vegetables

From a health standpoint, vegetables are a five-star food group: naturally nutrient-rich; better tasting than a vitamin pill; low in calories and fat; cholesterol-free and packed with disease-fighting phytonutrients. To maximize your health with vegetables, nutrition experts suggest at least 3 to 5 servings per day – in a rainbow of colors. All types of vegetables can be nourishing and delicious – fresh, frozen, canned and juiced. Here are a dozen daily ways to treat yourself to good health!

1. **Broccoli and cauliflower:** Versatile and very healthful – eat them raw (with dip if you like) or cooked, in a salad or even a slaw.
2. **Carrots:** Sweet, crunchy, good for your teeth, eyes and heart! Perfect raw (as a snack or salad) or cooked in a stew.
3. **Peppers:** Green, red, yellow, orange or even purple! Enjoy peppers in a salad, stir-fry, or casserole or as a snack.
4. **Spinach:** A salad of baby spinach leaves with pears or apples can turn anyone into a real spinach lover.
5. **Onions:** The zesty onion family (scallions, leeks and garlic, too!) offer some powerful antioxidant nutrients.
6. **Peas:** Fresh, frozen or even canned, peas are a treat to eat and they are very popular with small children.
7. **Beets:** If you've never liked beets, try them in a new way – like roasted, grilled or lightly steamed in the microwave.
8. **Sweet potatoes and yams:** Switch the color of your usual baked potato and you'll get a lot more nutrients, along with great taste.
9. **Mushrooms:** Just a mushroom or two adds rich flavor to a casserole, soup, stew, stir-fry or even a tossed green salad.
10. **Leaf and romaine lettuce:** Rule of thumb for a healthy salad – the darker green or red the lettuce leaves, the more nutrients you get.
11. **Green, yellow or purple beans:** Like their pea 'cousins,' beans offer some fiber and a little bit of protein, along with vitamins and minerals.
12. **Tomatoes:** Cooking increases the availability of some tomato nutrients – so enjoy canned sauce, paste and chunks.

