



# Ways to add vegetables

Only **1 in 10** Americans eats the recommended amounts of vegetables per day, according to recent data. It is important to find ways to add vegetables to your daily diet. Eating enough vegetables (about 2.5 cups per day for the average healthy person, according to the Dietary Guidelines for Americans) can help lower your risk for chronic diseases and help your body function day-to-day. Vegetables tend to be low in fat and calories and contain many nutrients that support health, including:

- Dietary fiber: supports bowel health and heart health
  - Vitamin C: supports wound healing and immunity
  - Potassium: supports heart health and helps regulate blood pressure
  - Vitamin A: supports eye and skin health
- ...and many more!

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Consuming the recommended daily allowance of vegetables does not have to be difficult. Here are some ideas for incorporating more vegetables into your day.

- Start your day with vegetables! Consider adding vegetables to an omelet or adding spinach to a breakfast smoothie.
- Use vegetables as dippers for snacking instead of crackers or chips. Try cucumber slices, broccoli or cauliflower pieces, carrot sticks, or slices of bell pepper with low-fat dip or hummus.
- Add extra to your sandwich: try spinach, avocado, or peppers on your sandwich. Or even just add additional lettuce and tomato.
- Remember that canned and frozen vegetables are excellent, convenient options too. Just ensure they don't have added salt or fat (avoid added salt in canned vegetables and salt and fat from any added sauces in frozen vegetables).
- Choose one new vegetable to add to your spaghetti sauce, curry, or salad: start with just adding one new vegetable to these existing recipes. The more variety, the better!
- Snack on raw vegetables. Cherry tomatoes, sugar snap peas, jicama sticks, and baby carrots make good snacks all on their own.
- Meal prep vegetables so that they are easy to grab and take on the go, or to use in a recipe. If a recipe calls for just half of a vegetable, prepare all of it and save the rest to make adding the vegetable to a future recipe easier.

**Sources:** *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025; MyPlate.gov, "Vegetables," <https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/vegetables>; MyPlate.gov, "VaryYourVeggies," <https://www.myplate.gov/tip-sheet/vary-your-veggies>*

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