



FACT SHEET POTATO NUTRITION

The Power of Potato Nutrition

The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends consuming sufficient amounts of fruits and vegetables while staying within energy needs. In addition, the Guidelines recommend choosing a variety of fruits and vegetables from all five vegetable subgroups (dark green, orange, legumes, starchy vegetables and other vegetables) several times per week. This translates to 2 ½ cups of vegetables per day for a 2000-calorie diet. Why not start with the vegetable everyone already loves, the potato? One medium potato counts as one cup of vegetables.

Potassium

- Potassium is a mineral that is part of every body cell. It helps regulate fluids and mineral balance in and out of cells and in doing so, helps maintain normal blood pressure. Potassium is also vital for transmitting nerve impulses or signals, and in helping muscles contract.
- One medium potato (5.3 ounces) with skin is a good source of potassium, providing 620 milligrams or 18% of the recommended daily value (DV) per serving.
- Potatoes rank highest for potassium content among the top 20 most frequently consumed raw vegetables and the top 20 most frequently consumed raw fruits.
- A 2006 report from the American Heart Association indicates that almost 1/3 of Americans have hypertension and that potassium is a powerful dietary factor that can lower blood pressure. Unfortunately, few Americans are getting the potassium they need. Data from the most recently published National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey indicated that only 6% of men and < 3% of women are meeting the recommended potassium intake of 4700 milligrams per day!
- Eating just one medium potato – about the size of a computer mouse – can get you well on your way to meeting your daily potassium requirement.

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Potato Nutrition Facts

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Vitamin C

- Vitamin C is a water-soluble vitamin that acts as an antioxidant stabilizing free radicals, thus helping prevent cellular damage.
- In addition, Vitamin C aids in collagen production; assists with iron absorption; and helps heal wounds and keep your gums healthy.
- Vitamin C may help support the body's immune system.
- Potatoes are an excellent source of vitamin C (45% of the DV), which is more vitamin C than one medium tomato (40% DV) or sweet potato (30% DV).

Fiber

- One medium potato (5.3 ounces) with the skin contributes 2 grams of fiber or 8% of the daily value per serving.

B6

- Vitamin B6 is a water-soluble vitamin that plays important roles in carbohydrate and protein metabolism. It helps the body make nonessential amino acids needed to make various body proteins; it is a cofactor for several co-enzymes involved in energy metabolism; and is required for the synthesis of hemoglobin – an essential component of red blood cells.
- Potatoes are a good source of vitamin B6 with 10% of the recommended daily value.

Iron

- One medium potato provides 6% of the recommended daily value of iron.

Combining Potatoes with other Vegetables for Better Nutrition

- Potatoes provide the perfect complement to many other vegetables and, because of their immense popularity, they can serve as a conduit for increasing overall vegetable consumption. For example, a baked potato topped with broccoli and cauliflower; mashed potatoes mixed with spinach and onions; roasted potatoes with onion, peppers, and mushrooms; or a tuna Nicoise salad with asparagus, potatoes and lettuce each provide at least 3 servings of vegetables.
- For additional information and recipes, visit www.healthypotato.com.

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