



# DARK GREEN, RED, & ORANGE VEGETABLES

## Why should we eat dark green vegetables?

Dark green vegetables are rich in vitamins A, C, and K, and folate. These nutrients protect bones, decrease inflammation, help with vision, improve immunity, and protect against some types of cancers. Some of these vegetables are good sources of vitamin E, which is also important for immune health and protection against heart disease.

### Dark green vegetables

- Bok Choy
- Broccoli
- Collard Greens
- Dark Green Leafy Lettuce
- Kale
- Mustard Greens
- Romaine Lettuce
- Spinach
- Watercress

### How much should we eat?

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends eating 1 1/2 cups of dark green vegetables per week. Rather than trying to eat it all in one meal, try dividing it into 1/2 cup servings 3 times per week. This way you can also include other colors of vegetables, keeping your plate looking more like a rainbow!

One half cup of dark green vegetables equals:

- 1 cup raw, dark leafy vegetables
- 1/2 cup cooked greens
- 1/2 cup cooked broccoli

## Why should we eat red and orange vegetables?

Red and orange vegetables are high in beta carotene, which the body turns into vitamin A. Vitamin A helps protect against infection and some types of cancer. Many of these vegetables also have high levels of vitamin C, potassium, and vitamin K. Vitamin C promotes healing, potassium can lower blood pressure, and vitamin K helps with blood clotting.

### Red and orange vegetables

- Acorn Squash
- Butternut Squash
- Carrots
- Hubbard Squash
- Pumpkin
- Red Bell Peppers
- Sweet Potatoes
- Tomatoes

### How much should we eat?

The recommended intake for red and orange vegetables is 5 1/2 cups per week. Try dividing this up into multiple servings as well!

One half cup of red and orange vegetables equals:

- 1/2 cup cooked and mashed acorn or butternut squash
- 6 baby carrots or 1 medium carrot
- 1/2 of a large red pepper
- 1/2 of a large sweet potato
- 1/2 of a large tomato



## Add more dark green vegetables



**GREEN SMOOTHIES:** Toss a handful of spinach into fruit smoothies.

**SALADS:** Chop greens, like kale, into fine strips and mix them with other greens. Or try a massaged kale salad - massage a small amount of oil into raw kale for three minutes, until the kale softens. Toss with lemon juice and parmesan cheese to serve.

**STEAM:** When cooking green vegetables, cook for just a short time, until the greens are tender and bright green.

**KALE CHIPS:** Remove the kale stems and tear the leaves into small pieces. Wash and thoroughly dry the leaves. Massage in ½ tablespoon of oil and spread in a single layer on a baking sheet. Bake at 350°F for 10-12 minutes, until the edges are brown.

**STIR FRY:** Add broccoli florets or chopped greens to stir fry recipes.

**SOUPS:** Add chopped or torn greens just before serving and cook just until bright green.

**PASTA:** Toss chopped or torn greens with the cooked pasta and sauce, allow the hot pasta to wilt the greens before serving.

**GRAINS AND BEANS:** Mix chopped or torn greens into hot grains or beans.

## Add more red & orange vegetables



**RAW:** Carrots, tomatoes, and red bell peppers are delicious raw. Eat them in salads, sandwiches, or with a low-fat dip. Keep ready-to-eat vegetables in your refrigerator.

**ROASTED:** Cube acorn squash, butternut squash, hubbard squash, pumpkin, or sweet potatoes, toss with a little olive oil, and roast at 400°F for about 25 to 30 minutes.

**BURRITOS:** Lightly cook red bell pepper slices and add to burritos.

**BAKED:** Substitute sweet potatoes for traditional baked potatoes or fries.

**OMELETS:** Stuff omelets with vegetables like carrots, red bell peppers, and tomatoes.

**STIR FRY:** Try carrots, red bell peppers, or even squash in stir fry recipes.

**OTHER MAIN DISHES:** Add grated, shredded, chopped, or pureed carrots, red bell peppers, tomatoes, or squash to lasagna, meatloaf, mashed potatoes, pasta sauce, soups, stews, casseroles, and rice dishes.

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