

Vegetable of the Month

Cauliflower



Cauliflower, as its name implies, is a flower growing from a plant. In its early stages, it resembles broccoli, which is its closest relative. While broccoli opens outward to sprout bunches of green florets, cauliflower forms a compact head of undeveloped white flower buds. The heavy green leaves that surround the head protect the flower buds from the sunlight. The lack of exposure to sunlight does not allow chlorophyll to develop. Therefore, color is not produced, and the head remains a white color. Cauliflower contains a high amount of vitamin C, folate, fiber, and complex carbohydrates. It is also a cruciferous vegetable being studied for its role in reducing cancer risk.

Nutrition Facts

Serving Size (99g)
Servings Per Container

Amount Per Serving

Calories 25 Calories from Fat 0

% Daily Value*

Total Fat 0g 0%

Saturated Fat 0g 0%

Cholesterol 0mg 0%

Sodium 30mg 1%

Total Carbohydrate 5g 2%

Dietary Fiber 2g 8%

Sugars 2g

Protein 2g

Vitamin A 0% • Vitamin C 80%

Calcium 2% • Iron 2%

*Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

	Calories:	2,000	2,500
Total Fat	Less than	65g	80g
Saturated Fat	Less than	20g	25g
Cholesterol	Less than	300mg	300mg
Sodium	Less than	2,400mg	2,400mg
Total Carbohydrate		300g	375g
Dietary Fiber		25g	30g

Calories per gram:

Fat 9 • Carbohydrate 4 • Protein 4

Varieties

There are two types of cauliflower on the market today. The creamy white florets are more abundant in the United States but some markets sell a recently developed cauliflower-broccoli hybrid. This type of cauliflower has a green curd and resembles broccoli. The green variety is less dense than the white, cooks more quickly, and has a milder taste.



Selection

Cauliflower is generally available year round, but it is usually more plentiful in autumn. When selecting cauliflower, look for heads that are white or creamy white, firm, compact, and heavy for their size. There should not be any speckling or discoloration on the head or leaves. Avoid cauliflower with brown patches. A medium-size head, that is 6 inches in diameter and weighs about 2 lbs, will serve 4 to 6 people.

Storage

Cauliflower will keep for up to five days if stored in the crisper section of the refrigerator. If the head is not purchased wrapped, store it in an open or perforated plastic bag. Keep the head stem-side up to prevent moisture from collecting on it. For the best flavor, cauliflower should be eaten as soon as possible. Precut florets do not keep well, and they are best when eaten within a day of purchase.

Preparation

Cauliflower can be served cooked or raw. Peel off stem leaves. Turn cauliflower upside down. Cut the stem just above where the florets join together. Separate the florets into equal sized pieces. Cut if necessary.

When cooking cauliflower, you may leave the head whole. Rapid cooking time not only reduces the odorous sulfur compounds but also preserves crispness, color, and reduces the loss of nutrients that will leach into the cooking water when vegetables are overcooked. Steaming and microwaving cauliflower will better preserve its vitamin content, especially the B vitamins, than if it is boiled. To microwave cauliflower, put 2 cups of florets in a shallow microwavable dish, or cover a whole head of cauliflower with plastic wrap. For florets, cook for 3 minutes on high, then let stand for 2 minutes. For whole cauliflower, cook on high for 3 minutes, turn head over, and cook for an additional 2 to 4 minutes. Let stand for 3 minutes. To steam cauliflower, place it in a steamer basket, and then place in a pot with 2 inches of water. Cover and steam. Florets will take 3 to 5 minutes to cook. A whole head of cauliflower (1 1/2 lbs) will take 15 to 20 minutes to cook, but begin checking for tenderness after 12 minutes.

Tip

Cauliflower may turn yellow in alkaline water. For whiter cauliflower, add a tablespoon of milk or lemon juice to the water. Do not cook cauliflower in an aluminum or iron pot. The chemical compounds in cauliflower will react with the aluminum and turn the vegetable yellow. While in an iron pot, it will turn a brown or blue-green color.

Make Cauliflower Part of Your 5 A Day Plan



- Raw florets make a crunchy, nutritious appetizer with low-fat dressing or dip.
- Add fresh or leftover cauliflower to soups or stews.
- Use chopped florets in place of meatballs as an addition to your favorite pasta sauce for a delightful vegetarian pasta dish.
- Cauliflower can also add a zest to your favorite tossed salad.
- Cauliflower can be substituted for broccoli in many dishes.
- Stir cooked cauliflower into mashed potatoes to enhance their texture (see Twice-Baked Potatoes recipe below).

Recipes

Cauliflower with Paprika-Garlic Sauce

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals two 5 A Day servings

4 cups small cauliflower florets

2 gloves garlic, minced

1 tsp olive oil

2 Tbsp apple juice

1 Tbsp fresh parsley

1 Tbsp red wine vinegar

1 1/2 tsp paprika

1/8 tsp salt

In a large saucepan with steamer rack, steam cauliflower over boiling water covered for about 8 minutes or until crisp-tender. Meanwhile, using a small saucepan prepare sauce. First cook garlic in hot oil for 30 seconds. Remove from heat; stir in apple juice, parsley, vinegar, paprika, and salt. Cook sauce until heated. Transfer cauliflower to a serving dish. Pour sauce over the hot cauliflower. Toss to coat.

Nutritional analysis per serving: calories 44, protein 2g, fat 1g, percent calories from fat 25%, fiber 3g, carbohydrates 8g, cholesterol 0mg, sodium 104mg

Potato Vegetable Salad with Yogurt

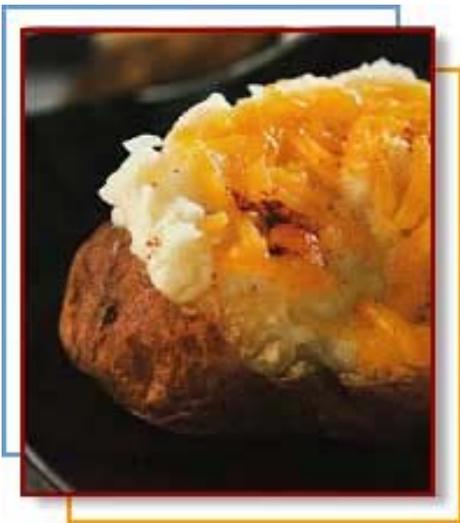
Makes 6 servings

Each serving equals ten 5 A Day servings

2 lbs red potatoes
2 cups broccoli florets
2 cups cauliflower florets
2 medium carrots, peeled
1 medium cucumber
3/4 cup sliced radishes
1/2 cup sliced scallions
1 cup plain low-fat yogurt
3 Tbsp Dijon mustard
1/2 tsp salt
1/2 tsp freshly ground pepper

Steam potatoes until they are tender. While potatoes are cooling, steam broccoli and cauliflower until slightly cooked, about 4 minutes. Set broccoli and cauliflower aside to cool. Cut carrots into thin slivers. Slice cucumber. Cut potatoes into chunks. Gently stir all vegetables together in a large mixing bowl. In another bowl, whisk together yogurt, mustard, salt and pepper. Pour yogurt dressing over vegetables and stir carefully coated evenly. Refrigerate 1 hour before serving.

Nutritional analysis per serving: calories 230, protein 11g, fat 1g, percent calories from fat 8%, cholesterol 2mg, carbohydrates 47g, fiber 6g, sodium 338mg



Twice-Baked Potatoes

Makes 4 servings

Each serving equals four 5 A Day servings

Source: Evelyn Tribole's Book "Stealth Health"

4 medium potatoes, washed

1 1/2 lbs cauliflower, washed green leaves removed

5 Tbsp nonfat milk, divided

1/4 tsp salt

1/4 tsp black pepper

1 cup (4 ozs) finely shredded reduced-fat sharp cheddar cheese

paprika

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Using a fork, puncture the potatoes. Bake for 40 to 50 minutes until tender. Meanwhile, cut cauliflower into about eight pieces and steam until very tender. Transfer the cauliflower to a food processor or blender (in two batches if necessary). Add 2 tbsp of the milk, salt, and pepper. Puree until smooth; the mixture will resemble mashed potatoes and make about 1 cup puree. Set aside.

Cut potatoes in half lengthwise. Scoop out the pulp and place into a large mixing bowl, leaving thin shells. Using an electric mixture on lowest speed, beat the potato pulp and the remaining milk until blended. Add the puréed cauliflower mixture and beat until well mixed (do not over beat). Stir in half of the shredded cheese.

Divide mixture among the potato shells. Top with remaining cheese and sprinkle with paprika. Return to oven and bake until the cheese melts, about 5 minutes.

Nutritional analysis per serving: calories 349, protein 26g, fat 5g, percent calories from fat 30%, cholesterol 21mg, carbohydrates 50g, fiber 9g, sodium 430mg