

# Did you know? Mushrooms are good for you!

There are more than 2,000 different species of mushrooms but only about 25 of them are enjoyed as part of our food choices. Mushroom varieties most familiar to U.S. consumers are the white button mushroom, cremini, portobello, shiitake, straw, oyster, and enoki.



**Nutrition:** All mushrooms are low in calories, carbohydrate, fat, and sodium. They contain no cholesterol and are good sources of several vitamins and minerals, including Vitamin D, which plays a role in keeping our bones healthy. Mushrooms are also an excellent source of antioxidants, compounds in foods that help to protect our bodies against chronic illness such as cardiovascular disease, some types of cancer, and some types of dementia.

**Mushroom Preparation and Cooking Tips:** Mushrooms have a meaty texture and a savory flavor that makes them an excellent meat substitute.

- Purchase loose, unpackaged mushrooms and inspect them for quality. Look for mushrooms that are slightly damp but not slimy or wet. A springy texture is a plus.
- Store loose mushrooms in a partially open zipper-lock bag, which maximizes air circulation without drying out the mushrooms. Leaving the bag slightly open allows for the release of the ethylene gas emitted from the mushrooms. Don't rinse/wash until you are ready to use them and don't store them wrapped in a paper bag or a damp towel. This can make them spongy.
- Rinse whole mushrooms under clear, cool water right before slicing and cooking.
- Do not freeze fresh, uncooked mushrooms. Instead, sauté mushrooms and then freeze them in small bags to use in favorite recipes.
- Roast mushrooms to get more sweet, salty, and umami tastes with caramelized, nutty, and buttery flavors.
  - To roast mushrooms: preheat oven to 450°, brush mushrooms with olive oil, place in a single layer on a baking sheet, and roast for 20 minutes, stirring occasionally.
  - To microwave mushrooms: Place 8 ounces of sliced mushrooms in a microwaveable bowl. Cover and cook on 100% power for 2-3 minutes. Toss onto a hot sandwich, chili, soup or packaged meal.
  - One pan cooking (great for sloppy Joes and pasta sauces): brown meat in a pan until cooked through, remove, and set aside. Then, add chopped mushrooms to the same pan, sauté and return meat to the pan to complete the recipe.
- Use slices of portabella mushrooms in sandwiches instead of lunchmeat.
- Add fresh mushrooms to salads and top your favorite pizza with them.

