

## 5 Delicious Ways to

### Choose Vegetables with Maximum Nutrition

Here are two important vegetable facts: (1) They are packed with great taste and good nutrition; and (2) few Americans get the full benefit of vegetable nutrition, because few of us eat enough. Kids need a cup of veggies a day, while adults need a total of 2½ to 3 cups daily. Here's how to get vegetable power in your life.

#### 1. Choose **FRESH** vegetables.

Fresh vegetables are a super choice, especially in season and locally grown. Enjoy fresh veggies raw or cooked quickly to retain nutrients. Almost any fresh vegetable can be served in a tossed salad. Start with leafy lettuce, spinach or cabbage; add sliced carrots, peppers, cucumber, and tomatoes; and top with chopped broccoli florets or pea pods.

#### 2. Choose **FROZEN** vegetables.

When fresh vegetables are unavailable or too pricey, frozen broccoli, peas, green beans, or edamame (green soybeans) are excellent choices. Buy large bags, take out what you need for a meal, and then seal tightly and put back into the freezer. To cook, microwave for a few minutes, quickly mix into a stir-fry, or add to casseroles and soups.

#### 3. Choose **CANNED** vegetables.

Some canned vegetables, including tomatoes, pumpkin, and beans (black, navy, pinto, etc.) are inexpensive nutrition powerhouses. Canned tomatoes (including the roasted and flavored varieties) are perfect in sauces and soups. Canned pumpkin goes great in breads and muffins, while beans are some of the most versatile veggies (see #4 below).

#### 4. Choose **DRIED** vegetables.

Some sun-dried tomatoes make a delicious addition to many Mediterranean recipes, including pasta dishes and hummus, a dip made with mashed chickpeas. Whether you use dried or canned varieties, legumes (peas, beans, and lentils) are nutrition at its best and least expensive. Add legumes to soups and casseroles, as well as salads and dips.

#### 5. Choose **100% vegetable JUICE**.

If you have your own juicer and an inexpensive source of fresh produce, veggie juice can be a refreshing and nutrient-rich beverage. If you are buying prepared juices, make sure that they are low in sodium and 100% juice products. Since no juice has the fiber benefits of whole vegetables, use juice for only 1 cup out of your daily 2½ to 3 cups.