

Potatoes fill you up but they aren't fattening

Spuds, more commonly known as potatoes, are the perfect answer to something warm and filling on a chilly November day. Potatoes are packed with nutrition and are low in calories, high in fiber and a great source of complex carbohydrates.

Contrary to popular belief, potatoes aren't fattening at all. A single medium potato has only about 110 calories. But skip the butter and sour cream — that's where the fat and calories sneak in.

Potatoes can be simply delicious cooked in a variety of non-fattening ways. Baking and boiling are your best bet. Stay away from the fried variety which include potato chips and french fries... the calorie count will triple.

When baking a basic white or Idaho potato, scrub it, dry it and place it on a rack in a hot-oven at 450 degrees. Bake for 30 to 45 minutes or until squeakably soft. Thanks to modern conveniences, you can even bake a potato in five minutes or so in your microwave oven.

Baked potatoes are wonderful as a meal in themselves. Try topping them with vegetables and sprinkling with low-fat cheese or Parmesan.

Ever try a "pizza potato"? Just split open a baked potato, top with low fat mozzarella cheese and tomato sauce, and place under the broiler for a minute or two. This is a big hit with teens.

POTATOES COME in many varieties. Boiled redskin potatoes make a great side dish to any meal. My favorite potato right now is the Yukon Gold potato. They are loaded with flavor and serve as a lean and tasty alternative to high-fat candied yams.

Try this tasty method of baking Yukon Gold potatoes: Bake potatoes in the oven 1 hour at 350 degrees or microwave 6 minutes on high, then slice into wedges. Mix together minced garlic, olive oil and a dash of pepper. Roll potatoes in mixture and place on a baking sheet. Place under the broiler for about 5 minutes — watch until browned. Enjoy.

Why not add one of the world's most popular and widely grown vegetables to your meal planning? Here are a few potato recipes that are guaranteed to hit the spot on a chilly day. They're warm, filling, low in calories and wonderful.



Lite success
Florine Mark

POTATO PANCAKE
Makes 1 serving
3 ounces pared potato, finely grated
¼ teaspoon onion flakes
1 tablespoon all-purpose flour
¼ teaspoon each double-acting baking powder and salt
¼ teaspoon pepper
1 ounce Cheddar cheese, shredded

In small bowl combine potato and onion flakes; stir in flour, baking powder, salt and pepper.
Spray 10-inch nonstick skillet with nonstick cooking spray and heat. Spread potato mixture over bottom of pan and cook over medium heat until underside is brown and crisp, about 10 minutes. Using pancake turner, turn pancake over and cook until other side is brown. Sprinkle cheese over pancake; remove from heat, cover, and let stand until

cheese melts, about 2 minutes.

Each serving provides: 1 Protein Exchange, 1 Bread Exchange, 30 Optional Calories.

SOURCE: Weight Watchers Favorite Recipes Cookbook, 1988.

CHEESE 'N' BROCCOLI-TOPPED POTATO
Makes 2 servings
1 teaspoon margarine
¼ cup each diced onion and red bell pepper
¼ teaspoon all-purpose flour
¼ cup skim or nonfat milk
1 cup broccoli florets, blanched
2 ounces sharp Cheddar cheese, shredded
1 baking potato (6 ounces), baked and cut in half lengthwise (hot)

In 9-inch nonstick skillet melt margarine; add onion and pepper and saute over medium heat until tender-crisp, about 2 minutes. Sprinkle flour over vegetables and stir quickly to combine; cook, stirring constantly, for 1 minute. Reduce heat to low and gradually stir in milk; continuing to stir, cook until mixture thickens slightly, about 1 minute. Stir in broccoli and cheese and cook, stirring constantly until cheese is melted.

To serve, onto each of 2 plates set 1 potato half, cut-side up, score pulp in each potato half by making sever-

al cuts about ¼-inch deep in one direction, then several cuts in the opposite direction to form a diamond pattern. Top each potato half with half of the vegetable-cheese mixture; serve immediately.

Each serving provides: 1 Protein Exchange, 1 Bread Exchange, 1 ½ Vegetable Exchanges, ½ Fat Exchange, ¼ Milk Exchange, 3 calories Optional Exchange.

SOURCE: Weight Watchers Quick Success Program Cookbook 1989

TWICE-BAKED POTATO
Makes 2 servings
2 teaspoons margarine
¼ cup each finely chopped mushrooms and scallions (green onions)
2 ounces Gouda cheese, shredded
1 tablespoon chopped fresh Italian (flat leaf) parsley or 1 teaspoon parsley flakes
¼ teaspoon salt
Dash white pepper
1 baked potato (6 ounces)

In small skillet heat margarine until bubbly and hot; add mushrooms and scallions and saute until vegetables are tender. Remove from heat and stir in cheese, parsley, salt and pepper; set aside.

Cut potato in half lengthwise. Scoop out pulp from potato halves, leaving about ¼-inch-thick shells; mash pulp and reserve shells. Combine potato pulp with cheese mixture; spoon half of mixture into each reserved shell. Set stuffed potato halves on nonstick baking sheet and broil until potato is thoroughly heated and browned, 5 to 8 minutes.

Each Serving Provides: 1 Protein Exchange, 1 Bread Exchange, ¼

Vegetable Exchange; 1 Fat Exchange.

Variation: Substitute Swiss or Cheddar cheese for the Gouda.

SOURCE: Weight Watchers Favorite Recipe Cookbook, 1988.

ITALIAN-STYLE SCALLOPED POTATOES
Makes 2 servings
1 tablespoon olive oil
¼ cup diced onion
2 garlic cloves, minced
1 cup canned crushed tomatoes
1 tablespoon chopped fresh basil or 1 teaspoon dried
1 teaspoon mashed drained canned anchovies
6 ounces pared potatoes, thinly sliced
1 ounce grated Parmesan cheese

In 9- or 10-inch nonstick skillet heat oil; add onion and garlic and saute until onion is lightly browned. Add tomatoes, basil and anchovies and cook, stirring occasionally, until mixture thickens slightly.

Preheat oven to 425 degrees. In shallow 1 quart casserole spread half of tomato mixture; arrange potato slices evenly over sauce and spoon remaining sauce over potatoes. Sprinkle evenly with cheese and bake until potatoes are cooked and cheese has melted and formed a crust, 30 to 35 minutes.

Each Serving Provides: ¼ Protein Exchange, 1 Bread Exchange, 1 ½ Vegetable Exchanges, 1 ½ Fat Exchanges, 5 calories Optional Exchange.

SOURCE: Weight Watchers Fast and Fabulous Cookbook.

Business firms launch programs on wellness

Wellness is the popular food, nutrition and health buzzword of the '90s. Even high-powered, highly visible Fortune 500 companies are concerned about wellness as it relates to health care costs, employee absenteeism and productivity.

Many of these companies are conducting worksite wellness programs for employees. The nutrition connection to wellness is too important to be left to chance. Healthy-mindedness is in.

The average person eats about one ton of food a year. Hopefully, included in this 2,000 pounds are the nutrients you need to be at peak performance every day. These essential nutrients are carbohydrates, fat, protein, vitamins, minerals and water. In addition, food also contains other substances such as chemicals and additives.

Among the most common substances are caffeine (found in coffee, black tea, some colas and chocolate) and alcohol. Both chemicals have powerful effects on mood, energy and well-being. Examine your diet record to see how much caffeine and alcohol you are consuming.

GOOD NUTRITION starts with awareness. All too often it is easy to allow our eating habits to be influenced by stress, habit, convenience and other people. In this hurry-up, call-up, drive-through, prepackaged and frozen food world, it can be very difficult to eat a well-balanced meal.

Eating for comfort is learned from infancy, food is pleasurable and temporarily soothes the person who is under pressure. Stress does not significantly alter calorie requirements but can certainly affect how much you eat. For many, stress triggers a desire to overeat while others lose their appetite and will not eat. Remember, an adequately fed body responds more readily to



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stressful situations and keeps you at your peak.

Some foods can become a habit. Things go wrong and you reach for the box of chocolates for comfort. Indeed, it may make you feel better until the waistline starts to bulge. Chocolate, or whatever your comfort food, can become a habit. Some people rely on things other than good food. Don't waste your time and money on fat diets, diet pills or magic potions. Most of this weight loss is only water, not fat. Got the habit of eating balanced meals at the same time everyday. This way you condition your body to expect foods at certain times.

A diet poor in nutrients can have devastating effects on your body at any age and over a long period of time can cause permanent damage. Proper nutrition throughout the life cycle will keep the elderly at peak performance. Of course it doesn't stop the aging process, but it can help delay or avoid disorders commonly caused by nutritional deficiencies. Only you can change your eating style.

The right balance of minerals is essential to health. Sodium, calcium and iron are three nutrients that require special attention. Shake that salt habit. There is enough salt in foods, adequate for your body needs,

so put the salt shaker away. Too much sodium, of course, leads to high blood pressure, increased risk of heart attack, stroke and kidney disease.

LACK OF CALCIUM can lead to a dangerous thinning of bones later in life, so the need for calcium-rich food never stops. Iron is also an important nutrient. Iron enables the red blood cells to carry oxygen throughout the body and to remove carbon dioxide. Too little iron can cause irritability and fatigue. I'm sure you can see how these can affect your peak performance.

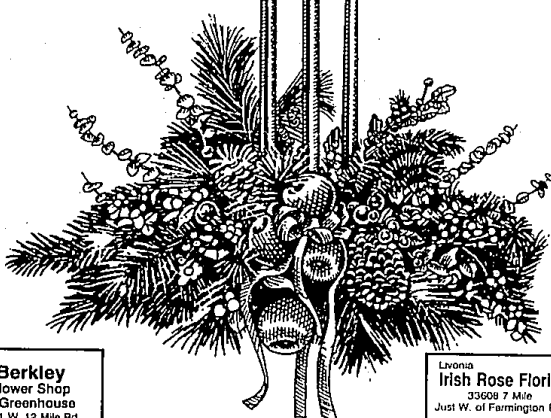
Today we hear a lot about good foods, bad foods, how much is enough, how much is too much, and it certainly gets confusing. Here are five major skills to learn: the essential nutrients in foods, how to cut back on fat and cholesterol, eat more fiber and less sugar, keep mindful of your minerals, and how you can choose and prepare foods.

If you are lucky enough to work for a company that offers worksite wellness programs, attend the sessions. We all want to perform at our very best, feel good, look good. Maybe better nutritional habits can be the answer to peak performance. Food should be more than just something to stop your stomach from growling.

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