

Falling for Orange Veggies!

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There is no question that eating a variety of vegetables has plenty of great health benefits. Vegetables provide us with nutrients that are vital to our body's development, maintenance, and disease prevention. And with the changing of the weather and the holidays on the horizon, orange veggies in particular can easily be utilized in recipes and happen to be very big contributors of several important nutrients.

Orange veggies like carrots, pumpkin, sweet potatoes and acorn squash are nutrient dense and full of flavor! More specifically, these veggies are high in carotenoids, which give them their bright yellow-orange color. But in addition to color, carotenoids have been shown to prevent different cancers and heart disease. A few well-known carotenoids are beta-carotene (found in carrots) and lycopene (found in tomatoes).

Orange veggies are also high in vitamin C and flavonoids. There again, both have been shown in research to reduce the risk of certain cancers and heart disease. Flavonoids have also been linked to preventing tooth decay and the flu. So, adding orange veggies to your family's diet is no doubt, a wonderful idea!

Orange veggies show up a good bit in holiday recipes, so this time of year presents the perfect opportunity to add these nutrient dense veggies to your menus. You can make mashed sweet potatoes, pumpkin and acorn squash in place of the standard white potato. Glazed carrots and acorn squash with a simple brown sugar or honey mixture are sure to peak a child's interest. You can also make pumpkin soup and of course, pumpkin pie! The sky's the limit on orange veggies; they are versatile, naturally sweet, and add great color to any meal.

So break out your recipe books and utilize all the recipe websites for some new nutritious orange veggie recipes!