

Mushrooms: What A Good Idea

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(NAPSA)—Adding mushrooms to your shopping list is a good idea since they are easy to use, versatile and provide a variety of valuable vitamins and minerals.



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Mushrooms are a good source of selenium and copper. Studies show selenium may reduce the risk of cancer—particularly prostate cancer—and may play a role in cardiovascular health. In addition, a properly working immune system and the production of thyroid hormones both depend on this important mineral. Selenium has also been shown to have reproductive health benefits for men and women. Copper works with iron to produce red blood cells and keep body tissues properly oxygenated.

Mushrooms are one of the best sources of riboflavin. One serving, about five medium mushrooms, is also a good source of niacin and pantothenic acid. These B vitamins play an important role in the body's use of protein, carbohydrates and fat for energy.

Raw, white mushrooms have a mild, woody flavor. Refrigerating mushrooms will keep them at their best. Store them in a paper bag or remove the plastic wrap from the original container and cover it with a paper towel. Wipe them with a damp towel or quickly rinse them in cool water (do not soak mushrooms) just before using them.

Think mushrooms when salad is on the menu. Try slicing them onto baby spinach leaves and cherry tomatoes for a colorful and delicious treat. Arrange paper-thin slices of Parmesan cheese (a vegetable peeler does this easily) on mixed greens and top with creamy white mushroom slices. Add a little olive oil and black pepper and serve with crusty bread for a salad that is too easy to be called "gourmet."

Perfectly sautéed mushrooms are a quick and easy vegetable. I always make extra because they are really handy to have in the refrigerator. Spoon them on to toasted bread and add a dab of low fat sour cream for a delicious snack or party appetizer.

Virtually fat free and without cholesterol, naturally low in sodium, very low in calories, a



Perfectly Sautéed Mushrooms can make a delicious, healthy addition to most any menu.

good source of valuable vitamins and minerals and delicious; mushrooms aren't just a good idea, they're a great idea.

Perfectly Sautéed Mushrooms

**For 8 ounces (about 3 cups sliced) white mushroom
Makes 2 servings**

1. Select a large (10 to 12 inch) heavy skillet. A smaller skillet will crowd the mushrooms causing them to steam.

2. Heat 1 tablespoon oil or butter over medium heat until hot enough to gently sizzle a mushroom slice. In order for the mushrooms to brown, the oil must be hot enough to sear, but not burn, the mushrooms.

3. Add mushrooms all at once; increase heat to medium-high. Cook, stirring occasionally, until mushrooms are tender, liquid evaporates and they begin to brown, about 6 minutes. Sprinkle with a pinch of salt and ground black pepper.

Variations:

- Before adding mushrooms, sauté ½ cup chopped onion or slivered red bell pepper in the oil.

- Sauté mushrooms with 1-tablespoon fresh herbs (or 1 teaspoon dried herbs) such as thyme, rosemary and marjoram.

Nutrients per serving: Calories 87; Protein 4g; Fat 7g; Calories from Fat 61; Carbohydrate 4g; Cholesterol 0mg; Fiber 1.4g; Sodium 145mg.

For more information, visit www.mushroomcouncil.com; www.5aday.com; or www.aboutproduce.com.