

The Cedar Culinary

News that's good enough to eat!

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Drop Weight Faster With Mushrooms

By Nancy Gottesman for Live Right Live Well

Okay, so a basket of mixed earthy mushrooms isn't exactly as eye-grabbing as a bowl of juicy cherries. And yet nutrient-wise, this homely little super food can compete with the best and the brightest of fruits and vegetables. What's more, a new study suggests these plain-but-powerful fungi can help you drop weight faster.

A Dieter's Secret Weapon

In a study conducted at Johns Hopkins Weight Management Center, researchers divided participants into two groups: one that ate a beef-based lunch and another that consumed a mushroom-based entree (e.g., mushroom lasagna, sloppy Joes or chili). Since mushrooms are so low in calories and fat, it's not surprising that the meals composed of beef served up a whopping **420 more calories and 30 more grams of fat** than those made with mushrooms. But here's what's really surprising: Mushroom-eaters reported feeling *just as satisfied* with their meals as beef-eaters -- and they didn't end up compensating for their lower-cal lunches by eating more later on in the day.

How can that be? "Mushrooms are a solid rather than liquid food, so people were consuming as much volume of food as the meat versions," explains Dr. Lawrence J. Cheskin, director of the Johns Hopkins Weight Management Center and lead author of the study. Though the study was too short to measure long-term weight loss (it lasted only four days), Cheskin is nevertheless enthusiastic: "We're certainly thinking mushrooms have the potential to be beneficial in weight control," he says.

A portabella mushroom contains only 35 calories, 1 gram of fat (0 grams saturated) and 2 grams of fiber. Compare that to the 232 calories, 15 grams of fat (6 grams saturated) and 0 grams of fiber found in 4 ounces of ground beef.

Low in Calories, High in Nutrients

Besides big potential in aiding weight loss, mushrooms are one of very few foods that are naturally rich in vitamin D, the nutrient-du-jour associated with lowering your risk of everything from cancer, heart disease and diabetes to arthritis, dementia and the common cold. Mushrooms are also a great source of the immune-boosting antioxidant selenium -- plus they're good sources of potassium, riboflavin, niacin and pantothenic acid.



Mushroom Boom

If you want to make mushrooms your new super-staple, here's how to incorporate more into your diet:

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Burgers Substitute a beef patty with a portabella that's grilled with olive oil, or add chopped mushrooms to lean ground beef to add moisture and subtract calories.

Skewers Marinate mushrooms in teriyaki, Italian dressing or steak sauce, place them on skewers and grill until tender.

Brown rice Add chopped walnuts and sautéed mushrooms to cooked brown rice.

Stir-fries Toss mushrooms into stir-fries: They'll add bulk and soak up surrounding flavors.

Tacos/burritos Add mushrooms to sautéed ground beef to save money and calories.

Chips and dip Forget potato chips -- dip mushroom slices into hummus instead.

Your local market should offer a wide variety of mushrooms. White button and portabella are the top-sellers, but all varieties can add a rich, meaty flavor to even the most basic foods. Best of all: They're practically calorie-free!



Hanukkah Potatoe Pancakes



Ingredients:

- 4 medium potatoes
- 1 medium onion
- 2 eggs
- 3/4 cup matzah meal
- Salt and black pepper
- Vegetable oil

Directions:

1. Place the 4 potatoes and onion into a food processor and coarsely grate both. Add the grated potatoes and onion to a strainer to remove excess water.
2. Take a large bowl and add the eggs and mix. Take the matzah meal and add to the mixture until a batter is formed.
3. Add a pinch of salt and black pepper.
4. Heat a griddle pan and add vegetable oil.
5. Now prepare the pancakes by using about two tablespoons of the batter to form the pancake. Place the pancakes onto the griddle. Use a spatula to press down on the pancakes until they turn a golden brown. Then flip over until the other side is brown as well.
6. Place on paper towels and then serve.

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