



M is for Mushrooms!

Presented by the Dietitians at Froedtert & Community Memorial Hospitals

Though mushrooms are often grouped with vegetables and fruits, they are actually fungi--for that reason, they are in a class of their own, nutritionally speaking. Mushrooms are not usually thought of as a particularly good source of nutrients, perhaps because they lack the brighter colors of so many other vegetables. But actually mushrooms rank rather high in nutritive value. They have a good deal of protein and contain a substantial amount of B vitamins, copper, and other minerals. Despite their somewhat meaty texture, mushrooms are low in calories.

5 mushrooms = 20 calories, 0 gram fat, 0 mg sodium, 3 grams carbohydrate, & 2 grams of protein.

Trading meat for mushrooms? The health benefits of moving to a plant-based diet are many, including reducing the risk for obesity, coronary artery disease, hypertension, diabetes and some types of cancer. Mushrooms go with just about anything, imparting their own flavor as well as taking on the flavors of other ingredients, so they're ideal for meatless recipes, from soups and appetizers to main courses and sandwiches. Their flavor intensifies during cooking and their unique texture holds up to a variety of cooking methods, including sautéing, grilling and stir-frying. Mushrooms are also an appealing addition to vegetable-based casseroles, stews or chilies.

There are about 38,000 varieties of mushrooms, some of them edible, others highly toxic. Button mushrooms continue to be the most popular however other varieties are increasingly popular and offer a wider range of tastes & textures.

Cooked fresh mushrooms are more nutritious than canned mushrooms: They have almost three times the niacin and potassium, twice the iron, and fifteen times the riboflavin of the same amount canned. But if you use the canning liquid in your recipe, you will be able to conserve the niacin & riboflavin. Just be sure to check the label listing the other ingredients in the can. Sometimes canned mushrooms contain more than four times the sodium of fresh cooked mushrooms, and if packed in a butter sauce, the fat content will be significantly increased.



GRILLED MUSHROOM PACKETS

INGREDIENTS

1 pound (about 5 cups) fresh white mushrooms, sliced
2 (about 3-1/2 cups) medium zucchini, sliced
1 (about 1/2 cup) medium onion, thinly sliced
1 (about 1 cup) red bell pepper, diced
1/2 cup couscous (uncooked)
1/2 cup homemade or bottled barbecue sauce
1/2 teaspoon salt, optional

DIRECTIONS

Preheat outdoor grill or oven to 425°F. Place mushrooms in a medium bowl. Add zucchini, onion, red pepper, couscous and barbecue sauce; toss until well coated; set aside. On a work surface place 4 sheets (each about 20 inches long) of heavy duty or doubled aluminum foil. In the center of each piece place mushroom mixture, dividing evenly. Bring long sides of foil together over mixture, allowing space for heat circulation and expansion; fold to seal. Fold up short ends; crimp to seal. Place on prepared outdoor grill, about 5 inches from heat source or in oven. Cook until vegetables are tender and couscous is cooked (on grill for about 15 minutes, turning once, or in the oven for about 20 minutes). Remove; let stand for 5 minutes. Carefully unfold foil and serve.