

# Eggplant

Eggplant is low in calories (35 per cup, cooked) and high in fiber (2.5 grams/cup, cooked) and water, making it a great choice for those who are watching their weight.

Eggplant also has tons of nutrients which are great for brain and heart health.



**What it is:** Eggplant is a member of the nightshade family of vegetables and grows on vines similar to tomatoes. Each variety is slightly different in taste and texture, but is typically a bit spongy and slightly bitter.

**Season:** August through September, but can usually be found year-round.

**Health Benefits:** Eggplants are a good source of potassium, folate, manganese, and fiber. One phytonutrient found in eggplant skin, called *nasunin*, has been found to protect cell membranes in the brain.

**How to Purchase:** Select an eggplant that is firm and heavy for its size with a smooth, shiny, brightly colored skin. If you press gently on the skin and the flesh springs back, the eggplant is ripe and ready.

**Storage:** Refrigerator crisper drawer or shelf. Do not cut before storing as exposed flesh will cause the eggplant to spoil more quickly.

**Preparation:** To tenderize the flesh and reduce the natural bitterness, “sweat” sliced eggplant by sprinkling with salt and allowing to rest for 30 minutes, then rinse to remove the salt. Eggplant can be baked, roasted in the oven, steamed, sautéed, or grilled.

*And God said, "Behold, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is on the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit. You shall have them for food. Genesis 1:29*

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### Ways to Get More Eggplant

- Lightly grill/saute eggplant slices on each side, substitute for meat on a sandwich or as a vegetarian "burger"
- Make *baba ganoush*, a dip made from pureed eggplant, and serve with raw veggies for dipping
- Dice eggplant and add to stir-fry dishes or on a skewer for grilling
- *Moussaka* is a Greek dish similar to lasagna which uses eggplant instead of noodles
- *Ratatouille* is a traditional French dish made of stewed vegetables, featuring eggplant



Baba ganoush



Moussaka



Ratatouille



**Fun Fact:** Eggplant got its name from 18<sup>th</sup>-century European varieties which were yellow or white, resembling goose eggs. The name for eggplant in British-English is *aubergine*, in reference to its deep purple color.

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### Helpful Websites:

#### Health benefits

<http://www.care2.com/greenliving/8-great-reasons-to-eat-eggplants.html>

<http://www.livestrong.com/article/19046-nutritional-benefits-eggplant/>

#### Shopping, Storage, & Preparation

<http://www.whfoods.com/genpage.php?dbid=22&tname=foodspice>

<http://www.iloveeggplant.com/recipes>

#### Types of Eggplant

<http://www.iloveeggplant.com/varieties>

