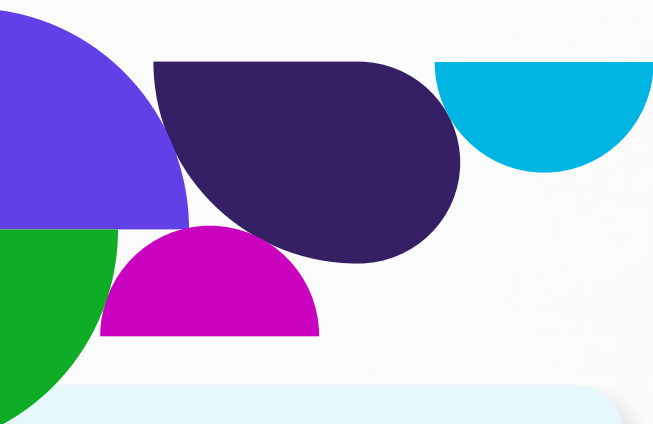




All about Tomatoes



Tomatoes are the world's most popular vegetable—and with good reason! They're delicious, versatile and oh so good for you. Read on to learn 10 more awesome facts about tomatoes.

This content is not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis, or treatment. Always seek the advice of your physician or other qualified health provider with any questions you may have regarding a medical condition.





1. Tomatoes are technically a fruit

OK, we just said they're the world's most popular vegetable. And culinarily and nutritionally, they are usually treated as a veggie. But in the plant world, they're considered a fruit. That's because they have seeds on the inside.



2. They're low in calories

One medium tomato has just 25 calories. Yet it makes a filling addition to any meal or snack.



3. They're packed with nutrients

They may be low in calories, but tomatoes are a powerhouse of nutrition. They're an excellent source of vitamin C, for example. Tomatoes also provide magnesium, phosphorous, fiber and more.



4. They're low in carbohydrates

Delivering just 5 grams of carbohydrate per medium fruit, tomatoes are a low-carb food. Even better, one-third of those carbs come from fiber. Since they're so low in carbohydrates and calories, they're considered a nonstarchy vegetable. If you follow the plate method of meal planning, you should aim to fill half of your plate with nonstarchy vegetables.



5. They're the biggest source of lycopene in most people's diets

Tomatoes are loaded with lycopene, a type of antioxidant that gives tomatoes their red color. Lycopene has several health benefits. It protects you from heart disease and is linked to a lower risk of some cancers.



6. They're even better for you processed

Nothing beats the flavor and texture of fresh-from-the-vine tomatoes. But processed tomatoes and tomato products, such as tomato paste, tomato sauce and canned tomatoes, have even higher concentrations of lycopene than fresh tomatoes. And they're delicious—and convenient.



7. They're a good source of potassium

Tomatoes have a decent amount of potassium, an electrolyte that helps your heart, nerves and muscles to function. People with certain stages of kidney disease need to limit the potassium in their diet. If that's the case for you, talk to your coach about how to eat tomatoes in a safe way.



8. They're mostly water

Tomatoes are 94% water. No wonder they taste so refreshing on a hot day! Like drinking a glass of water, fluid-rich foods like fruits and veggies can help your body hydrate.



9. They protect your skin from sunburn

It's no replacement for sunscreen, but researchers found that people who ate tomato paste with olive oil for 10 weeks had 40% fewer sunburns. The water and vitamin C content of tomatoes are also good for your skin.



10. They're even better with olive oil

Because many of the nutrients in tomatoes are fat-soluble, your body gets even more of a benefit when you eat them with a source of fat, such as olive oil. Lycopene and other carotenoids, and vitamins A and K, all get absorbed with the help of fat.

With thousands of varieties ranging in shape, size, color and flavor, there are so many tomatoes to try. Whether it's small, sweet Sungold cherry tomatoes, zebra-striped beefsteaks, plum tomatoes, grape tomatoes or a can of crushed tomatoes you've got on hand, there are many ways to satisfy a tomato craving.

Here are three recipes worth trying: ↪



Heirloom tomato cucumber salad

Ingredients

3 medium heirloom tomatoes,
chopped

1 medium cucumber, peeled
and chopped

1 medium shallot, diced

1 tsp lime juice

1 Tbsp olive oil

Preparation

Makes 4 servings

Preparation time: 5 minutes

In a large bowl, toss together tomato, cucumber
and shallot. Add in lime juice and olive oil.

Toss well.

Nutrition per serving (Around 1/2 heaping cup per serving)

Calories	Fat	Sat.Fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fiber	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
72	4 g	1 g	8 mg	0 mg	10 g	1 g	3 g	2 g	327 mg



Caprese skewers

Ingredients

8 cherry tomatoes
4 small mozzarella balls (ciliegine)
4 basil leaves
1 tsp olive oil
1 tsp balsamic vinegar
4 small skewers

Preparation

Makes 4 servings
Preparation time: 5 minutes

On each skewer, spear one tomato, one mozzarella ball, another tomato and a folded basil leaf. Place skewers on a plate, and drizzle with olive oil and balsamic vinegar.

Nutrition per serving (1 skewer per serving)

Calories	Fat	Sat.Fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fiber	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
134	7 g	3 g	40 mg	15 mg	11 g	4 g	6 g	11 g	787 mg



Quick tomato soup

Ingredients

½ cup olive oil
1 large onion, diced
2 28-oz cans crushed tomatoes
2 tsp dried oregano
3 cups low-sodium vegetable broth

Preparation

Makes 4 servings
Preparation time: 5 minutes
Cook time: 40 minutes

In a medium pot or Dutch oven, heat oil over medium heat. Add onions. Cook until they start to brown. Add tomatoes and oregano and stir. Add broth and bring to a simmer. Lower heat and cook uncovered for 40 minutes. Blend soup using an immersion blender or by pouring soup into a countertop blender.

Nutrition per serving (1.5 cups per serving)

Calories	Fat	Sat.Fat	Sodium	Cholesterol	Carbs	Fiber	Sugars	Protein	Potassium
282	25 g	4 g	234 mg	0 mg	13 g	3 g	7 g	3 g	67 mg