

## Do You Do Raw Foods?

Some say that eat raw foods are the most nutritious, but is eating RAW a great health hack. Yes and No, some foods are more nutritious when eaten raw, while others are more nutritious after being cooked. It's unnecessary and probably not healthy to follow a completely raw diet for good health.

Generally speaking for the most health benefits eat a variety of nutritious raw and cooked foods. When it comes to veggies some vitamins are lost when food is cooked, while others become more available for your body to use. Cooking veggies deactivates the enzymes found in them, but according to [healthline.com](https://www.healthline.com) there is no evidence that food enzymes contribute to better health. What does happen when cooking is some nutrients are easily deactivated or can leach out of food. Water-soluble vitamins especially, such as vitamin C and the B vitamins, are particularly susceptible to being lost during cooking. In fact, boiling vegetables may reduce the content of water-soluble vitamins by as much as 50–60%, while some minerals and vitamin A are also lost during cooking, although to a lesser extent. Fat-soluble vitamins D, E and K are mostly unaffected by cooking.

Boiling results in the greatest loss of nutrients, while other methods of cooking more effectively preserve the nutrient content of food. **Steaming, roasting and stir-frying are some of the best methods of cooking vegetables when it comes to retaining nutrients.** What is also important is the length of time that a food is exposed to heat affects its nutrient content. **The longer a food is cooked, the greater the loss of nutrients. Studies have shown that cooking vegetables increases the availability of antioxidants like beta-carotene and lutein.**

According to [healthline.com](https://www.healthline.com) one study found that cooking tomatoes reduced their vitamin C content by 29%, while their lycopene content more than doubled within 30 minutes of cooking. Also, the total antioxidant capacity of the tomatoes increased by over 60%. Another study found that cooking increases the antioxidant capacity and content of plant compounds found in carrots, broccoli and zucchini. **Antioxidants are important because they protect the body from harmful molecules called free radicals.** A diet rich in antioxidants is associated with a lower risk of chronic disease. It's also better to eat certain foods cooked, as raw versions may contain harmful bacteria. Cooking food effectively kills bacteria that may cause food-borne illness.

**Raw meat, fish, eggs and dairy often contain bacteria that can make you sick.**

**However, fruits and vegetables are generally safe to consume raw, as long as they have not been contaminated. Spinach, lettuce, tomatoes and raw sprouts are some of the fruits and vegetables most frequently contaminated by bacteria.** What also needs to be mentioned is that cooked foods are easier to chew and digest than raw foods. Proper digestion is necessary to absorb a food's nutrients so chew away.

## **Foods That Are Healthier Raw**

**Broccoli:** Raw broccoli contains three times the amount of sulforaphane, a cancer-fighting plant compound, than cooked broccoli does

**Cabbage:** Cooking cabbage destroys the enzyme myrosinase, which plays a role in cancer prevention. If you choose to cook cabbage, do so for short periods.

**Onions:** Raw onion is an anti-platelet agent, which contributes to heart disease prevention. Cooking onions reduces this beneficial effect .

**Garlic:** Sulfur compounds found in raw garlic have anti-cancer properties. Cooking garlic destroys these sulfur compounds

## **Foods That Are Healthier Cooked**

**Asparagus:** Cooking asparagus breaks down its fibrous cell walls, making folate and vitamins A, C and E more available to be absorbed.

**Mushrooms:** Cooking mushrooms helps degrade agaritine, a potential carcinogen found in mushrooms. Cooking also helps release ergothioneine, a powerful mushroom antioxidant (

**Spinach:** Nutrients like iron, magnesium, calcium and zinc are more available for absorption when spinach is cooked.

**Tomatoes:** Cooking greatly increases the antioxidant lycopene in tomatoes

**Carrots:** Cooked carrots contain more beta-carotene than raw carrots

**Potatoes:** The starch in potatoes is nearly indigestible until a potato is cooked.

**Legumes:** Raw or undercooked legumes contain dangerous toxins called lectins. Lectins are eliminated with proper soaking and cooking.

**Meat, fish and poultry:** Raw meat, fish and poultry may contain bacteria that can cause food-borne illnesses. Cooking these foods kills harmful bacteria.

*SIDE NOTE: Fresh vs Frozen vs.*

*Canned: In general, frozen vegetables are better than canned. Fresh vegetables are blanched before freezing, and they do lose some nutrients but not a lot.*

*Produce frozen right at its peak has more nutrients than produce that is picked too early, held, and shipped for thousands of miles. Sometimes canning increases nutrients such as tomatoes. If it is local eat fresh if not go frozen and in some cases to canned. [See more here.](#)*