

Getting the Most Out of the Foods We Eat

What is a nutrient rich food? The most nutrient rich foods include low-fat or non-fat dairy products; lean meat, fish, poultry, and meat alternates; fruits; vegetables; and whole grains. So, for a nutrient rich snack an obvious choice would be cantaloupe chunks instead of a chocolate chip cookie!

What may not be so obvious is that there are more nutrient rich choices within each food group. Based on vitamin A, vitamin C, and fiber content, cantaloupe and kiwi are much more nutrient dense than fruit juices.

Tips for inserting nutrient rich food into meals you already serve:

- ☑ Mozzarella cheese is low in fat and high in calcium; use it to top your favorite sandwich. String cheese is a great choice for children.
- ☑ Replace mayonnaise with thin slices of rich and creamy avocado for a boost in healthy oils, potassium, and vitamin E. Try mustard or low-fat ranch dressing for spreads or dips.
- ☑ Choose whole grain bread and you will have not only a flavor treat but a high fiber sandwich that's hard to beat. For the kids, start with one slice white and one slice whole grain for a bi-color effect.
- ☑ Add leftover or frozen vegetables to canned (reduced sodium) soup to boost your intake of vegetables without the hassle of making soup from scratch. Add canned dried beans to boost protein and fiber.
- ☑ Add grated carrots to a jar of spaghetti sauce for added vitamin A and a thicker sauce.
- ☑ Consider adding a meatless meal to your regular lunch menus. Check out the creditable meat alternatives in *What's In A Meal?* to offer variety and incorporate new foods into your menus like red beans and rice or a lentil stew.
- ☑ Let children make their own fruit parfait by layering fresh or canned fruit in a cup and topping with granola and low-fat vanilla yogurt.

Source:

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