

# Simple Ways to Offer Vegetables

It's important for children to eat vegetables to get the nutrients needed for their growing bodies. Vegetables provide vitamins, minerals, and are usually low in calories. They are simple to prepare and can be served cooked or raw. Vegetables are available in different shapes, textures, colors, and varieties. Here are some tips to make it easy to add more vegetables to your meals and get children to try them.

## Helpful Tips

- Serve vegetables every day to help children become familiar with them.
- Take children shopping for vegetables. Ask them which vegetables they would like to try and buy them.
- Use fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables. Select canned vegetables labeled as “reduced sodium,” “low sodium,” or “no added salt.”
- Plant a vegetable garden with your children and use the produce for your meals.
- Serve vegetables in a variety of colors, aromas, textures, and temperatures.
- Serve raw or lightly steamed vegetables with salad dressing or dips such as hummus, salsa, or yogurt-based dressings.
- Try not to overcook vegetables. Short cooking times preserve taste, bright appearance, and valuable nutrients.
- Make mashed sweet potatoes instead of white potatoes or baked sweet potato fries.
- Add extra vegetables to meals by mixing them into foods or adding them as a side dish. Corn, green beans, and chopped carrots make great additions to canned soups.
- Substitute spaghetti squash for pasta.
- Try new vegetable recipes like cauliflower mashed “potatoes.”



# Recipe Corner

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**Try this recipe in place of mashed potatoes at your next meal.**

## Creamy Mashed Cauliflower

### SOURCE

Adapted from <https://www.eatingwell.com>

Servings: 4 (3/4 cup each)

Serving size: 3/4 cup

### INGREDIENTS

- 8 cups bite-size cauliflower florets (about 1 head)
- 2 teaspoons minced garlic
- 1/3 cup low-fat, fat-free milk
- 1 teaspoon butter
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- Snipped fresh chives for garnish (optional)

### PREPARATION

1. Bring a large pot of water to a boil. Add cauliflower florets and cook until tender, about 12–15 minutes.
2. Drain cauliflower and return to the cooking pot.
3. Add garlic, milk, butter, salt and pepper. Using a potato masher mash the cauliflower mixture until creamy.
4. Transfer to serving bowl.
5. Garnish with fresh chives, if desired.
6. Serve.



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