Avocados: Which variety is the healthiest? [1]

Dear Alice,

I love avocados and have heard that the different varieties have different health benefits and some are less fattening than others. Please can you tell me about different varieties and which are best.

Many thanks!

Answer

Dear Reader,

No matter the color, shape, or size, avocados are delicious and nutritious! There are a wide variety of avocados on the market, each with a unique flavor, texture, and nutritional value. Thanks to alternating shipment seasons, people across the United States have access to avocados all year round. California and Florida produce the vast majority of avocados in the United States.

California avocados largely consist of the Hass variety, which are the most widely available type on the market. They have thick, leathery skin that turns dark green-to-black as the fruit ripens. California ships avocados throughout the United States, even all the way to Florida and other states on the East Coast. These medium-sized fruits weigh approximately 4.8 ounces (136 grams), and contain:

- Approximately 227 calories
- 2.9 grams of saturated fat
- 13.3 grams of monounsaturated fat
- 2.5 grams of polyunsaturated fat

Florida avocados are all members of the green-skinned avocado family. These have less fat, but more moisture than the Hass, and thus are not as sweet and nutty tasting. As they ripen, green-skinned avocados retain their light-green skin. Green avocados tend to bruise more easily during shipment because of their thinner skin, restricting shipments from Florida to primarily Eastern U.S. markets. These avocados tend to be larger in size, and typically weigh a hefty 10.7 ounces (304 grams). One green-skinned avocado contains:

- 6 grams of saturated fat
- 16.8 grams of monounsaturated fat
- 5.1 grams of polyunsaturated fat

No matter their hue, eating both black and green avocados provides multiple health benefits, including:

- Acting as a "nutrient booster" by enabling the body to absorb more fat-soluble nutrients in foods that are eaten with the fruit, such as alpha- and beta-carotene.
- Providing more than 25 essential nutrients, including fiber, potassium, vitamin E, B-vitamins, and folic acid.
- Providing consumers with a healthy source of fat. The avocado is virtually the only fruit that has monounsaturated fat (a.k.a. good fat).
- Providing a good source of fiber.

Adding heart-healthy unsaturated fats to your diet, available in avocados, nuts, and olive oil, may help you make the most of your fruits and veggies and eat a more balanced diet. One delicious way to eat avocados is using avocado spread in place of high-fat spreads, such as butter and mayonnaise. For more information, you can check out Avocados are fatty? are they healthy? [2].

See you?avocado go now!

Alice!

Category:
Nutrition & Physical Activity [3]
Food Choices & Health [4]

Related questions

Difference between olive oil and corn oil [5]
Good vs. bad fats [6]
Nuts about nuts: Are some better for health than others? [7]
What's the difference between vitamins and minerals? [8]

Published date:
Nov 18, 2011
Last reviewed on:
Jul 31, 2014
Go Ask Alice! is not an emergency or instant response service.

If you are in an urgent situation, please visit our Emergency page to view a list of 24 hour support services and hotlines.

Source URL: http://www.goaskalice.columbia.edu/answered-questions/avocados-which-variety-healthiest

Links