



# POTATO FAQs

## ARE POTATOES BENEFICIAL IN THE DIET OF AN ATHLETE?

**Yes.** One medium (5.3 ounce) skin-on potato provides **26 grams of carbohydrate, 620 milligrams of potassium and 110 calories for energy**—key nutrients in the diets of athletes and active individuals.

## ARE POTATOES GOOD FOR YOU?

**Yes.** Potatoes are naturally **fat free, cholesterol free and low in sodium**. In addition, potatoes are an **excellent source of vitamin C**, and those eaten with the skin are a good source of potassium. Foods that are good sources of potassium and low in sodium, such as potatoes, may reduce the risk of high blood pressure and stroke.

## ARE ALL THE NUTRIENTS IN THE SKIN OF THE POTATO?

**No.** While the skin does contain approximately half of the total dietary fiber, the majority of the nutrients are found within the potato itself.

## ARE THERE DIFFERENCES IN NUTRIENT CONTENT BETWEEN THE SEVEN DIFFERENT TYPES OF POTATOES?

There are more than 200 varieties of potatoes sold throughout the United States. Each of these varieties fit into one of seven potato type categories: russet, red, white, yellow, blue/purple, fingerling and petite.

The nutritional differences are slight, though **potatoes contain antioxidants, including vitamin C, carotenoids and anthocyanins**. The amounts and types are dependent upon the potato variety. So, make sure to include a number of different potato types (e.g., reds, purples, yellow, russets) in your diet.

## WHAT IS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN WHITE POTATOES AND SWEET POTATOES?

Both sweet and white potatoes provide similar amounts of key nutrients, including protein (2 grams and 3 grams respectively), potassium and vitamin B6, all of which contribute to a well-balanced, nutrient-dense diet.

They are similar in their calorie contents as well as the amount of fiber, protein and vitamin B6. **White potatoes pack the greater potassium punch** (620 mg versus 440 mg), whereas sweet potatoes definitely lead the way in vitamin A (120% of the daily value). Both provide an excellent source of vitamin C (45% of the daily value for white potatoes and 30% of the daily value for sweet potatoes).



### ARE POTATOES HIGH IN CARBS?

**Yes.** Potatoes are a carbohydrate-rich vegetable. A medium 5.3-ounce potato with the skin contains **26 grams of carbohydrate**.

### ARE POTATOES FATTENING?

**No.** A 5.3-ounce skin-on potato has only **110 calories** and **no fat**. Experts agree weight gain occurs when an individual consumes more calories than they expend.

### HOW LONG DOES IT TAKE TO COOK A POTATO?

Potatoes come in hundreds of shapes and sizes. Preparation time will vary by recipe and by potato type, ranging from a few minutes to an hour. Try the smaller varieties for a quick stovetop meal and remember to use the microwave to speed the cook time of all your potato recipes.

### WHAT IS THE PROPER WAY TO STORE POTATOES?

- Store potatoes in a cool, well-ventilated place.
- Colder temperatures lower than 50°F, such as in the refrigerator, cause a potato's starch to convert to sugar, resulting in a sweet taste and discoloration when cooked. If you do refrigerate, letting the potato warm gradually to room temperature before cooking can reduce the discoloration.
- Avoid areas that reach high temperatures (beneath the sink or beside large appliances) or receive too much sunlight (on the countertop).
- Perforated plastic bags and paper bags offer the best environment for extending shelf life.
- Keep potatoes out of the light.
- Don't wash potatoes (or any produce, for that matter) before storing. Dampness promotes early spoilage.

### WHERE ARE POTATOES GROWN?

Potatoes in the United States are grown in nearly every state, although about half of the crop comes from Idaho, Washington, Wisconsin, North Dakota, Colorado, Oregon, Maine, Minnesota, California and Michigan. Most potatoes are harvested in September and October (fall).