



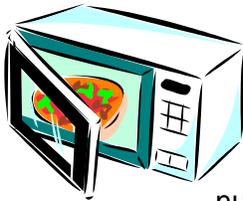
COOKING CAN AFFECT QUALITY

Some foods go way beyond satisfying your hunger and meeting your nutritional needs. Some foods are what we call “functional foods” because they contain extra ingredients that prevent or slow the damage to our body caused by free radicals. Those free radicals increase our risk for health problems like heart disease, cancer, diabetes and macular degeneration. Some of those “extra ingredients” are antioxidants, the most common being Vitamin A, B, C, E, selenium, flavanoids, lycopene, lutein and ligans. These “extra ingredients” are found in large quantities in beans, grain products, fruits and vegetables.

Speaking of vegetables . . . did you know that **HOW** you cook some of them affects their antioxidant level? According to an article in the Journal of Food Science (April 2007), researchers who cooked vegetables using six different methods (boiling, microwaving, pressure-cooking, griddling, frying and baking) found that some methods affected the antioxidant level in vegetables more than others. Their recommendation to all cooks is that “water” is not your best friend when preparing vegetables!



If you’re looking to get the most out of your vegetables, there are a few things that you can do to preserve the nutrients that are available. According to Betty Kovacs, MS, RD, the two most susceptible vitamins to damage are the water-soluble vitamins B and C. These vitamins can be absorbed into the water, so if you’re going to consume the water as in a soup or sauce . . . no problem, But if not, you’d be better off microwaving or steaming



Cooking vegetables as quickly as possible will also help preserve their nutrients. Microwaves use less heat so nutrients are less susceptible to destruction. The goal is to keep your vegetables from getting overcooked and soggy!

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: Wednesday, April 6

**National
Start!
Walking Day**



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