

Pale, Hale and Definitely Not Kale

Cauliflower is a rising nutritional star – and just what the doctor ordered

By Melanie Peters | November 02, 2015

When it comes to getting the biggest bang out of your nutritional buck, the rule of thumb is go with color. Flashy-hued vegetables and fruits are [high in vitamin A](#), responsible for forming and maintaining healthy skin and teeth, and as a cancer fighter, there's evidence that the dark pigments in plant foods, called carotenoids, are converted into beta-carotene, an antioxidant that protects [cells from being damaged](#) [↗](#).

The superstars of colorful vegetables are leafy greens: Brussel sprouts, broccoli, spinach and, of course, kale. Not only are they high vitamin A, but vitamins B, [especially folic acid](#), K and [calcium](#). Kale has become the poster vegetable of healthy eating. From salads to smoothies to [tote bags and tee shirts](#) [↗](#), it seems to have overgrown the healthy eating scene.

But there's another vegetable now [making headlines](#) [↗](#), not only for its nutritional value but for its versatility: cauliflower. While it seems counterintuitive – it's a white vegetable after all – cauliflower is a member of the brassicaceae family and therefore has a similar nutritional profile to [broccoli and other cabbages](#) [↗](#). Although we're most accustomed to seeing the white version of cauliflower in produce sections, cauliflower actually comes in a variety of colors – [even purple](#) [↗](#).



Cauliflower is gaining well-deserved recognition as a kale alternative, in part, because it can be used so many different ways. Its relatively mild flavor takes well to spices. It stands up to a variety of preparations, from roasting to boiling, soups to salads. Looking for a lower fat alternative to mashed potatoes? [Pureed cauliflower](#) [↗](#) does the trick. Want to sneak some extra nutrition into your kids' macaroni and cheese? Substitute some of the pasta with [chopped cauliflower](#) [↗](#). Need a gluten-free alternative to pizza crust? Yup, [you guessed it](#) [↗](#).

With the holiday season about to start, many of us will be looking for healthy alternatives to seasonal favorites as well as recipes that can feed and satisfy a crowd. Here are some cauliflower recipes that are sure to be welcome at any holiday gathering and help beat kale fatigue.

Cauliflower, White Bean, and Feta Salad [↗](#) (Courtesy of *Bon Appetit*): Salads are a great way to bulk up a holiday buffet. This flavorful salad is easy to prepare and can feed a crowd without breaking the bank.

Mediterranean Cauliflower Pizza [↗](#) (Courtesy of *Eating Well*): Nothing beats pizza for serving a crowd, young and old. Plus, you can easily make it a party by providing a variety of toppings for people to personalize their pizzas.

Cauliflower Gratin [↗](#) (Courtesy of *Barefoot Contessa*): Gratin potatoes are a holiday favorite for a reason. Nothing says “holiday” like creamy, comforting potatoes covered in cheese. This version lightens the carb load by eliminating potatoes, but keeps the comfort with a creamy Gruyere sauce.
