

Potato information for teachers

The role of potatoes in the diet

Potatoes are low in fat, provide lots of vitamins and minerals and if eaten with the skin, and are a good source of fibre. Potatoes are known as starchy food. Starchy foods are those that mainly provide carbohydrate and should make up a third of our diet.



Along with other starchy foods, potatoes play an important role in a healthy balanced diet.

There are lots of different ways that potatoes can help add variety to the diet. Potatoes can be combined with different foods to create healthy, balanced meals.

For example ...

- Leek and potato soup
- Potato salad
- Wedges with chilli
- Lancashire hotpot
- Jacket potato with beans
- Fish pie
- Shepherd's pie

When cooking with potatoes, try these tips to keep your dishes healthy:

- make mash with a little milk and no butter;
- boil and bake potatoes instead of frying;
- use vegetable oil when roasting;
- cut potatoes for roasting into bigger pieces;
- have wedges, rather than chips;
- do not add butter or creamy sauces.

A 180g jacket potato (skin and flesh) provides the following nutrients:

Energy	245 kcal/ 1045 kJ
Vitamin C	25.2 mg
Fibre	4.86 g
Protein	7 g
Carbohydrate	57g
Fat	0.36 g

Carbohydrate - your main source of energy, needed for growth and activity.

Protein - helps the body grow and repair itself.

B Vitamins - needed to help the body to get energy from carbohydrate. They also help the nervous system, heart and skin.

Vitamin C - important to keep skin healthy and to heal any cuts or grazes.

Iron - helps blood carry oxygen around the body.

Fibre – helps the body get rid of waste.

Did you know..?

One medium-sized jacket potato with skin provides more vitamin C than two apples or an average serving of peas. It has even more fibre than either a bowl of branflakes, three slices of wholemeal bread or four bananas.