



## Zucchini bread is not a vegetable

**We've been making (and eating) a lot of zucchini bread lately. Is it as nutritious as I hope it is?**

As with any homemade dish, the nutrition really depends on your recipe.

Zucchini itself is a great vegetable. A half-cup of sliced raw zucchini or other summer squash contains just 10 calories but supplies 15 percent of the daily recommendation for vitamin C, as well as a gram of fiber and good amount of vitamin K, riboflavin, vitamin B6, folate, magnesium and potassium.

If you don't peel the skin, you'll have the added benefit of getting a healthy dose of the nutrients lutein and zeaxanthin — carotenoids that can promote healthy vision and potentially offer other health benefits.

As for zucchini bread, most recipes call for one to two cups of grated zucchini per loaf. If you use one cup, you would have to eat half the loaf to get a half-cup serving of zucchini. (Um, that's not recommended.) Suffice it to say, that slice of zucchini bread on your plate doesn't legitimately count as a vegetable.

You can find a wide range of calorie counts in different zucchini bread recipes. A quick online search results in recipes that offer anywhere from 87 calories per slice (in a "low-fat, low-calorie" recipe) to 260 calories per slice (in a recipe that jazzes up the bread with chocolate and almonds).

If the recipe that you're using

doesn't include calorie and other nutrition information, you can plug the ingredients into any of several free online calculators to figure that out. Just search for "recipe nutrition calculator" to find one.

Also, you can easily adjust your zucchini bread recipe to make it healthier. Try these:

- Substitute half of the flour with whole-wheat flour, or use whole-wheat pastry flour entirely. Using whole-wheat flour instead of standard white flour increases your intake of whole grains. The U.S. Dietary Guidelines recommend that half the grains we eat be whole grains, which have more vitamins, minerals and fiber than refined grains.

- If the recipe calls for oil, use applesauce instead (use a one-to-one substitution). A half-cup of oil has nearly 1,000 calories, while a half-cup of applesauce has just 50.

- Use liquid egg substitute or egg whites instead of whole eggs. One-quarter cup of liquid egg substitute equals one egg; whites from two eggs equal one whole egg. This reduces calories and cholesterol.

- Try reducing the sugar in the recipe by one-quarter. Reducing sugar from one cup to 3/4 cup saves nearly 200 calories in the loaf.

*Chow Line is a service of Ohio State University's College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences and its outreach and research arms, Ohio State University Extension and the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center. Send questions to Chow Line, c/o Martha Filipic, 2021 Coffey Road, Columbus, OH, 43210-1044, or filipic.3@osu.edu.*



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### **Editor:**

This column was reviewed by Carolyn Gunther, community nutrition education specialist for Ohio State University Extension, the outreach arm of the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences.

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