 The Truth About Avocados

For decades, avocados were known as the “fatty fruit” that people should avoid. However, the more research that was completed, the more people began to realize that avocados are, in fact, good for the body. Avocados are one of the few fruits that provide “good fat”. Most of the fat in an avocado is monounsaturated fat, which has been proven to lower LDL cholesterol levels, decrease blood pressure, and reduce the risk for heart disease and stroke. Also, avocados are a good source of vitamin K, fiber, potassium, folate, and lutein, a carotenoid filled with antioxidant properties.

The table below demonstrates that, although avocados are “fatty”, they are a healthier alternative to the typical spreads used today. Even though they are a “good fat”, they are still high in calories, so remember to enjoy in moderation.

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| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Fresh Avocado | Butter, Salted | Mayonnaise, with salt |
| Portion (1-ounce) | 2 Tbsp. or 2-3 thin slices | 2 Tbsp | 2 Tbsp |
| Calories | 50 | 204 | 109 |
| Total Fat (g) | 4.5 | 23 | 9.4 |
| Saturated Fat (g) | 0.5 | 14.6 | 1.4 |
| Cholesterol (mg) | 0 | 61 | 7 |
| Sodium (mg) | 0 | 164 | 199 |

\*adapted from whfoods.org

The following list contains just a few examples of the many ways to incorporate avocados in your everyday diet.

* A sandwich spread in place of butter or mayonnaise
* Sliced on a sandwich, burger, or salad
* Use as a dip for vegetables (instead of ranch dressing)
* Blend into a smoothie for a rich, creamy texture
* Spread on bagel instead of cream cheese
* Dice up with tomatoes and onion for a nice salsa
* Blend it up and use as a pasta sauce
* **\*\* see avocado.org for many recipe ideas \*\***

If the avocado is still firm when you buy it, this means it is NOT ripe. Simply place it in a brown paper bag at room temperature. When the avocado is no longer firm and is darker in color, it is ready to enjoy.

Resources

1. Avocados. Available at: http://www.avocado.org/. Accessed August 29, 2011.
2. The Avocado Advantage. Web MD web site. Available at: http://www. webmd.com/diet/features/avocado-advantage. Accessed August 30, 2011.
3. Avocados. The Worlds Healthiest Foods web site. Available at: http://www. whfoods.com/genpage.php?tname=foodspice&dbid=5#nutritionalprofile. Accessed August 30, 2011.