



## News You Can Use

Nutrition Education  
with Seniors

November 2019

### Diabetes Awareness Month!

Millions of older adults have either prediabetes or diabetes. But many don't even know they have it! Diabetes is when our bodies have a hard time using glucose (sugar) for energy. When we eat carbohydrate foods (e.g., bread, fruit, sweets, milk) our bodies break them down into glucose.

When we have prediabetes or diabetes, the glucose stays in our blood, which is harmful. If we don't lower glucose levels, it can lead to kidney disease, eye problems/blindness, and nerve damage in hands and feet.

The risk of developing prediabetes or diabetes increases with unhealthy lifestyle behaviors (e.g., eating high fat diets, not being active, etc.). Prediabetes and diabetes can come on slowly and may go unnoticed because of this. Signs of diabetes include:

- Fatigue
- Increased hunger or thirst
- Unexplained weight loss
- Frequent urination
- Blurred vision

Remember, it's never too late to change your lifestyle to help manage, prevent or delay the onset of prediabetes or diabetes! Try these tips:

1. Eat a MyPlate friendly diet
2. Achieve and maintain a healthy weight
3. Be active and include strength training because the muscles are where glucose is used most

Adapted from:

<https://www.nia.nih.gov/health/diabetes-older-people>



**Canned sweet potatoes, sweetness that lasts!**

#### Selection:

- Choose cans without leaks, dents, or bulges which could mean the sweet potatoes are unsafe to eat.
- Check the "Best by" or "Best if used by" date on the can.

#### Storage:

- Store unopened cans in a cool, clean, dry place.
- After opening, keep the **sweet potatoes** in a tightly covered glass or plastic container for up to four days in the refrigerator or up to two months in the freezer.

#### Nutrition:

- 1 cup of **sweet potatoes**:
- Provides 220 calories and 6 grams of fiber.
- Counts as one ounce equivalent from the MyPlate veggie group.

#### Uses:

- Include **sweet potatoes** in casseroles, desserts, and soups.
- Have sweet potatoes with lean protein and a fruit for a MyPlate friendly meal.

# Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP)!

With the weather getting colder and heating bills going up, LIHEAP can help. "LIHEAP assists eligible households with:

- Heating and cooling costs,
- Bill payment assistance,
- Energy crisis assistance,
- Weatherization and,
- Energy-related home repairs."

## Requirements (equal to or less than):

Household Size	Maximum Income Level (Per Year)
1	\$ 18,735
2	\$ 25,365

Applications are accepted on a first come, first serve basis **November 1-April 30. Those age 60 years and older can start applying October 1<sup>st</sup>.**

If you are receiving Iowa food assistance, Supplemental Security Income (SSI), Temporary Assistance Program for Needy Families (TANF) or certain needs-tested Veterans benefits you may also automatically qualify.

You can apply at your local county outreach office. You can find your's by visiting: <https://humanrights.iowa.gov/dcaa/where-apply>

## Easy Slow Cooker (or Roasted) Veggies

Serves: 4 | Serving Size: 1 cup

### INGREDIENTS

4 cups cut vegetables (sweet potatoes, onions, parsnips, carrots)  
1 tablespoon oil (olive preferred)  
2 teaspoons of EITHER Italian seasoning or thyme  
1/8 teaspoon of black pepper and salt

### INSTRUCTIONS AND TIPS

1. If roasting veggies, pre-heat oven to 425°F or spray slow cooker with cooking spray.
2. Chop up veggies and mix together with oil.
3. Mix spices together. Pour over veggies and stir.
4. Cover; cook on LOW heat setting for 4-5 hours or until veggies are tender. Or roast for 20 to 40 minutes.

Nutritional analysis (1cup): 130 calories, 3.5g fat, 0.5g saturated, 0g trans, 105mg sodium, 24g carbohydrates, 4g fiber, 9g sugar (naturally occurring), 2g protein. This recipe is adapted from *Spend Smart. Eat Smart.*

<https://spendsmart.extension.iastate.edu/recipe/easy-roasted-veggies/>

## Sweet Potatoes OR Regular Potatoes?

**Sweet:** Lower in carbohydrates, higher in vitamins A and C

**Plain:** Lower in fat and higher in protein and fiber.

Whether you choose a sweet potato or regular potato is up to you and your taste buds. Both are part of a MyPlate friendly diet.

Remember, choose cooking options like baking or roasting the potatoes for a healthy, fulfilling side.

Adapted from: <https://universityhealthnews.com/daily/sweet-potatoes-vs-potatoes/>

## Helpful Resources

**Polk County  
Congregate Meals**  
(515) 286-3679

**Commodity and  
Supplemental Foods**  
(515) 286-3655

**Nutrition, Food  
Preparation and Food  
Safety**  
ISU AnswerLine  
1-800-262-3804

### PREPARED BY

Savannah Schultz  
Diet & Exercise Graduate Student;  
schultzsz@iastate.edu

### ASSISTED BY

Sarah L. Francis, PhD, MHS, RD  
ISU Associate Professor & Human  
Sciences Extension and Outreach  
State Specialist, Nutrition and  
Wellness; slfranci@iastate.edu

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