



**For the week of  
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**Editor:**

Editor: This edition of Chow Line was reviewed by Jaime Ackerman, registered dietitian and nutrition associate for Ohio State University Extension in the College of Human Ecology.

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## Eggplant low-cal, but has few nutrients

**I've recently rediscovered eggplant, and love making Eggplant Parmesan. Is eggplant very nutritious?**

Eggplant is low-calorie—a half-cup of boiled cubed eggplant has only 14 calories. The reason? It's mostly water: raw eggplant is 92 percent water, by weight.

Because of this, eggplant doesn't offer a whole lot of nutrients. That half-cup serving has less than a half-gram of protein and about 3 grams of carbs. Eggplant also offers some fiber, calcium, potassium, folate and other vitamins and minerals. Still, a half-cup of boiled eggplant is not a significant source of any nutrient, offering less than 5 percent of the Recommended Dietary Allowance for every nutrient it contains. Still, calorie for calorie, eggplant can be a good choice for vegetable dishes and entrees.

Substituting eggplant for chicken in your Parmesan dish is a great idea if you're trying to cut calories. Without breading, a 3.5-ounce portion of cooked eggplant has about 28 calories, while a 3.5-ounce portion of cooked chicken breast has about 165 calories.

You can cut even more calories if you refrain from frying the eggplant after breading it. Instead, put the breaded eggplant slices on a cookie sheet sprayed with

cooking spray, then bake for 20 minutes or broil for five minutes on each side. Then follow your recipe, adding tomato sauce and mozzarella cheese, for a satisfying, low-calorie dish.

When choosing eggplants, look for firm, smooth, deep purple skin. Avoid any with brown or blue streaks, a light color or yellowish cast — these are usually signs of poor quality. Also, beware of cracks across brown spots on the skin — that's an indication of a storage disease that causes eggplant to spoil rapidly. People usually remove the skin before cooking eggplant, but that's not necessary if you can find young, early-harvested eggplants.

Eggplants should be heavy and firm. Shriveled or flabby eggplants are usually bitter. Medium-sized eggplants, about three or four inches in diameter, are usually the best choices.

For more information, see the Ohio State University Extension fact sheet HYG-5517-93, "Selecting, Storing and Serving Ohio Eggplant," available online at <http://ohioline.osu.edu>.

*Chow Line is a service of 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](mailto:filipic.3@osu.edu).*