

Avocados: Yea or Nay?

 nutritioneducationstore.com/blog/should-you-eat-avocado/

Today, let's take a look at the pros and cons of the humble avocado.

An avocado is nutrient dense. Nutrient-dense foods provide substantial servings of vitamins, minerals, and other nutrients in proportion to the number of calories they contain. Although avocados are high in fat, most of that fat is heart-healthy monounsaturated fat.

So what about the calories?

The calories in an avocado are not messing around. Two tablespoons of mashed avocado (that's 1/5 of the whole thing or about 1 oz) provide about 55 calories. So, if you eat a whole avocado, then you're getting about 275 calories. That's a lot of calories, especially if you're on a calorie-restricted diet.

However, the key word is moderation.

A little avocado can add some real nutrition and variety to a meal. Plus, sometimes avocado can offer a nutrient-rich alternative to another less-healthy fat. Try slicing and spreading 2 tablespoons of avocado on your sandwich instead of mayo or butter. This will save you almost 40 calories! Yes, you get the fat, but it's definitely a better-for-you fat than those other spreads. And you really can't beat the flavor it adds.

When buying avocados, pick fruits that have firm skins, but which yield to gentle pressure and have no soft spots. These are the kind of fruits that will ripen after they're picked. Put unripe avocados in a paper bag at room temperature and they will ripen in the next 2-5 days. If you want them to ripen more quickly, add a ripe banana or apple to the bag. Why? These fruits give off a natural ethylene gas that helps to ripen the avocados. Once they're ripe, use them right away. You can also put them in the refrigerator, where they will last for a couple days.

So, when you ask whether you should make avocados a part of your diet, I say yea!

