

National Potato Chip Day- March 14th

The History of the Potato

Potatoes are widely known as a staple food on the island of Ireland, especially since the Famine, which was also known as the Irish Potato Famine. The Famine occurred from 1845-1852 and was a time of mass starvation and disease in Ireland. The potato became a staple in the Irish diet in the early 1800s. When the blight began to cause damage to the potatoes,



which destroyed both the leaves and the edible roots, or tubers, of the potato plant it caused a famine. The potato was heavily depended upon by the farmers and tenants as it is hardy, nutritious, and calorie-dense crop and relatively easy to grow in the Irish soil⁽¹⁾. The potato is a crucial element in food security, population growth, nutrition and urbanisation in various regions. The potato has recently become a predominant crop in various countries, for example, India, China and Africa⁽²⁾. Since the 16th century, when the potato was first introduced to Ireland it has been a staple in not only the diet but also known as a major part of the Irish culture. The potato is widely used due to its nutritional value, year-round availability and affordability⁽³⁾.



Did You Know?

The potato is the most popular of all vegetables⁽⁶⁾.

Health Benefits of Potatoes

Potatoes are classed as carbohydrates and starchy foods and are located on the second to last shelf of the food pyramid, recommending 3-5 portions of carbohydrates per day. Potatoes are complex carbohydrates. Complex carbohydrates are made up of many monosaccharides and contain starch⁽⁴⁾. Potatoes are a good source of the amino acids tryptophan and lysine. Potatoes are also a source of

fibre, which is a form of carbohydrate that aids in the feeling of fullness and supports a healthy digestive system. Potatoes are also a source of vitamin C and several = B vitamins including vitamin B1, B6 and folate. Potatoes are also an important source for potassium and in smaller amounts magnesium and iron⁽⁵⁾. Raw potatoes are low in fat and protein. The production of potato chips or crisps greatly increases the fat content due to the addition of oil during food processing⁽⁶⁾.

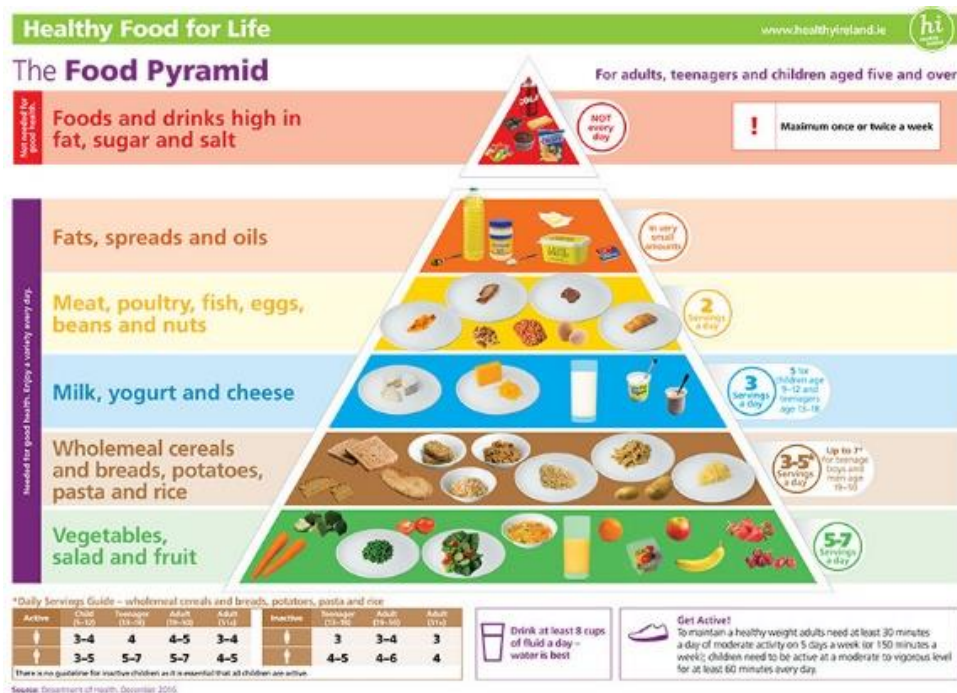


Figure 1- Healthy Ireland Food Pyramid⁽⁷⁾.

Did You Know?

Potatoes were a significant food for Peruvians for many years (up to thousands) and were introduced to Europe by the Spanish in the 16th Century⁽⁶⁾.

The Sweet Potato vs the Regular Potato

Sweet potatoes, in recent years, are widely preferred over regular potatoes due to a belief that they are more nutritious. Let's compare boiled sweet potato and regular potato: sweet potatoes contain significantly more sugar than the regular white potato, the majority of the sugar is sucrose. Both the regular white potato and the sweet potato have similar fibre contents. The boiled sweet potato has a higher content of vitamin C, magnesium, iron, phosphorus and calcium. The boiled regular potato has

a high content of folate, vitamin B1 and potassium⁽⁸⁾. It can be concluded that both potatoes have health benefits and have significant nutritional value.

Raw White Potato vs Sweet Potato

EU: NI (Labelling)	100g	100g
- COST -		
Cost	€0.10	€0.23
- ENERGY -		
Energy(Kcal)	80 ^{kcal}	86 ^{kcal}
Energy(KJ)	340 ^{kJ}	366 ^{kJ}
MACRONUTRIENTS -		
Carbohydrate	17.9 _g	19.7 _g
Protein	1.9 _g	1.2 _g
Fat	0.1 _g	0.3 _g
Water	78 _g	74 _g

Figure 2: Nutritics Data on the sweet potato vs regular potato ⁽⁹⁾.

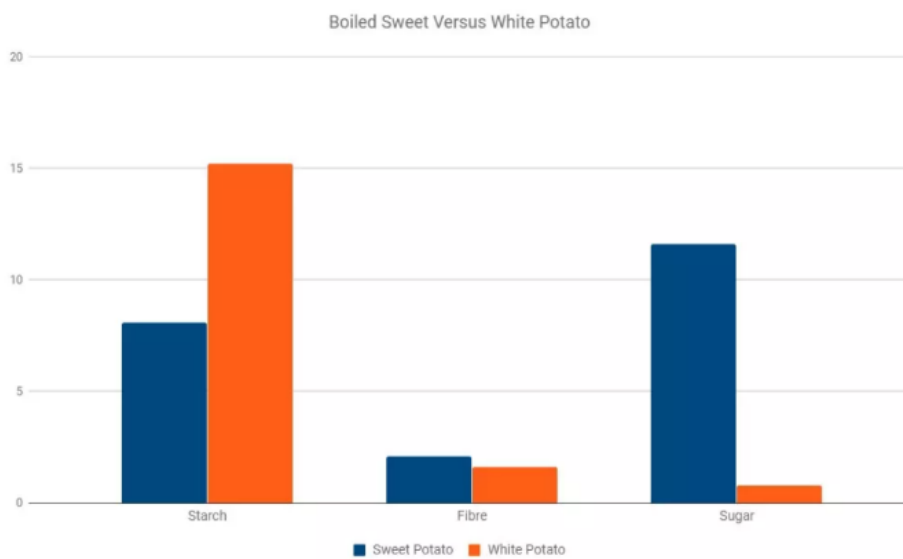


Figure 3: Nutritics data on the sweet potato vs the regular potato showing starch, fibre and sugar content ⁽⁹⁾.

Potato Chips/Potato Crisps

A potato chip, or more commonly known in Ireland as potato crisp, is a thinly sliced potato which has been baked or deep fried until there is a crispy consistency. Baked crisps have been increasingly popular in recent years due to its lower fat content as they are baked and not deep fried in saturated fat.

What to look out for when reading the label of potato chips/crisps -

When reading a nutrition label of a packet of crisps, there are a few things to be aware of:

- Use the traffic light system – an indicator of how much fat, saturated fat, sugar and salt are in the food. When reading the label: green indicate low amounts, orange/amber indicate moderate amounts, and red indicates high amounts.
- The fat content - many crisps are produced with added saturated fat. To reduce your saturated fat intake, try to choose crisps/chips with low saturated fat content, i.e. potato crisps with less than 1g of saturated fat per 100g.
- The salt content may be high depending on the flavour and how the crisps/chips have been produced. To reduce your daily salt intake, try to choose crisps/chips that are low in salt.
- Baked crisps are typically the healthier choice, however, be mindful of the labelling as they may still have a high salt or fat content.
- Be mindful of the ingredients list; the general rule of thumb is the less ingredients, the better.
- Be conscious of the added ingredients. There may be additives added to the chips/crisps to improve the taste or shelf life of the product. Chances are, if you do not recognise the name of an ingredient, it is an additive.

How to make homemade potato chips/crisps in an air fryer:

Air-Fryer Potato Chips

Yield: 6 servings

Ingredients

2 large potatoes

Olive oil-flavoured cooking spray/ low fat cooking oil spray

1/2 teaspoon sea salt

Minced fresh parsley, or other herbs or spices (optional)



Directions

1. Preheat air fryer to 360°. Using a mandoline or vegetable peeler, cut potatoes into very thin slices. Transfer to a large bowl and add enough ice water to cover. Soak for 15 minutes, then drain. Add more ice water and soak another 15 minutes.
2. Drain potatoes; place on towels and pat dry. Spritz potatoes with cooking spray; sprinkle with salt. In batches, place potato slices in a single layer on greased tray in air-fryer basket. Cook until crisp and golden brown, 15-17 minutes, stirring and turning every 5-7 minutes. If desired, sprinkle with parsley or other herbs and spices to taste.

Nutrition Facts

1 cup: 148 calories, 1g fat (0 saturated fat), 0 cholesterol, 252mg sodium, 32g carbohydrate (2g sugars, 4g fibre), 4g protein⁽¹⁰⁾.

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