

How to Spice Up Broccoli

by Pamela Fay

Broccoli is a smart addition to a healthy diet. Fresh or frozen, it provides vitamins A, B, C and K, as well as a number of trace minerals. According to a study at the Columbia University, those with diets that include cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli have a 38% lower risk of developing Alzheimer's. With a mild taste and pleasing texture, broccoli complements many dishes and is versatile enough to use as a staple in your diet. Add as little or as much as you like to your favorite recipes.

Delicious with Eggs

Cook eggs with broccoli. Cut the florets into bite-sized pieces and leave them slightly crisp. If you are just becoming accustomed to the taste of broccoli, chop it into smaller pieces to change the flavor and disguise the texture. Stir lightly cooked broccoli into scrambled eggs or layer it into your omelets. Add seasonings such as rosemary, marjoram, oregano and sea salt. Broccoli works well in a quiche or a frittata. To make an easy broccoli quiche recipe, use a purchased pie shell. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Saute 2 cups of chopped fresh broccoli, ¼ cup onions and 2 large mushrooms. Spice it up with 1 whole sliced jalapeno, if you like. Heat a little olive oil and butter in a skillet on medium heat. Cook the vegetables until tender and spoon over the pie crust. Spread 1 ½ cups of Swiss cheese over the vegetables. Mix 4 eggs with 1 cup of milk, and some salt and black pepper. Pour over the vegetables and bake until a knife inserted in the center comes out clean, about 30 minutes.

Broccoli in Casseroles

Combine broccoli with canned condensed soup, such as cream of mushroom or chicken, in a one-dish meal for a spiced up dinner. Thaw two 10 oz. packages or frozen broccoli; drain. Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Combine 1 can of cream of mushroom soup, 1 small chopped onion, 1 cup shredded Gruyere or fontina cheese, ¼ cup milk, 2 tablespoons olive oil and 1 cup uncooked instant rice. Spice it up with a dollop of red chili paste. Spoon into a greased two-quart casserole and bake for 40 to 50 minutes till hot and bubbly.

Veg Up an Entree

Add broccoli to your recipes for baked casseroles, such as lasagna or tuna casserole. Top a frozen pizza with leftover cooked or fresh broccoli. You can also put broccoli in stovetop dishes like spaghetti, Spanish rice and homemade soups. Warm a quart jar of prepared spaghetti sauce with lightly cooked broccoli, minced garlic, dried oregano and a pinch of salt. Spice it up with cayenne pepper—a little or a lot. Serve over spaghetti or your favorite whole grain pasta, cooked al dente.

Veggie Stir-fry

Chop fresh broccoli, red bell peppers, mushrooms, onions, ginger and garlic. Slice carrots on the diagonal. Preheat wok slightly. Add oil to lightly cover all surfaces. Saute the ginger and garlic for two minutes, stirring occasionally. Add remaining vegetables,

tossing in the hot oil until tender-crisp. Drizzle on your favorite stir-fry sauce and heat through. Remove from the wok and serve immediately.

References

“Health Day News”; Healthy Diet Could Cut Alzheimer’s Disease Risk; April 2011.
<http://www.umhc.com/stw/Page.asp?PageID=STW006385>