

Pick a **better** snack™ – THE COLOR WAY

BROCCOLI

Wash. Eat. How easy is that?



Broccoli is a nutrition superstar rich in vitamin C, fiber, folate, riboflavin, potassium, iron, beta carotene and lutein. It is usually available fresh year round in the produce section and always in the freezer section either singly or in combination with other vegetables.

When selecting fresh broccoli, look for those with tiny buds that are dark green/blue. If there is a yellow cast, the broccoli is past its prime. Once at home, store the unwashed broccoli in an open bag in the refrigerator. Washing before storage may encourage mold growth.

If you plan to cook the broccoli, split the stalk or cut an 'X' in the bottom of the stalk to increase the surface area and allow more even cooking. Another method of cooking would be to cook the stalk first for several minutes and then add the florets.

HOLIDAY VEGETABLE CUPS (YIELDS 12 APPETIZERS)

12 slices whole wheat sandwich bread
butter spray
2 Tablespoon commercially prepared alfredo sauce
2 cups broccoli, steamed
6 grape tomatoes
¼ cup shredded mozzarella cheese, optional

Trim crusts from bread (squares work best). Lightly spray both sides with butter spray. Put each slice into a separate section of a muffin tin (standard or mini size pan) letting the corners stick up slightly. Toast in an oven set at 275°F for about 5 minutes until crisp and golden. Cool. **Note:** you can store these in a covered container for later use or proceed. Place about ½ teaspoon alfredo sauce in the bottom of each toast cup. Add a floret of steamed broccoli and half of a grape tomato. Optional: add a teaspoon of shredded mozzarella cheese to the top of each cup. Arrange cups on a cookie sheet and heat in 400°F oven for about 5 minutes or until hot.

EASY VEGETABLE CRACKERS

Spread baked whole grain wheat crackers (reduced fat) with onion and chive cream cheese. Top with a broccoli floret and small piece of red pepper. Serve cold.

Include **GREEN** fruits and vegetables in your low-fat diet to maintain:

- A lower risk of some cancers
- Vision health
- Strong bones and teeth

Pick a **better** snack™ was developed in partnership with the Iowa Nutrition Network, Iowa State University Extension, and the USDA's Food Stamp Program and Team Nutrition - equal opportunity providers and employers. For more information, visit the Iowa Department of Public Health web site www.idph.state.ia.us/pickabettersnack or Iowa State University Extension web site www.extension.iastate.edu/food. For more information about 5 A Day the Color Way™, visit www.5aday.com.