

JUNE: PEPPERS

Peppers come in a variety of colors, shapes, sizes, and flavors. All are a great source of vitamins A and C and other important vitamins and minerals. Check out the facts on bell peppers and chili peppers!

CHECK OUT THE VARIETIES OF HEALTHY PEPPERS DESCRIBED BELOW!



Bell Peppers: **Bell peppers** are found in a rainbow of colors and flavors. The variety of the **pepper** plant and the stage of the ripeness determine the color and flavor of each **pepper**. For example, a **red bell pepper** is simply a mature **green bell pepper**. As a **bell pepper** ages, its flavor becomes sweeter and milder. **Red peppers** are one of the “super foods” so choose these!

- **Bell peppers** are available and are in good supply all year, but they are more plentiful and less expensive during the summer months. **Peppers** should be firm without any wrinkles, and the stem should be fresh and green. They should feel heavy for their size. Avoid **peppers** with sunken areas, slashes or black spots.
- Store unwashed **bell peppers** in a plastic bag in the refrigerator. They will stay fresh for about a week. **Green bell peppers** will stay fresh a little longer than the yellow and red ones.



Chili Peppers: There are several varieties of **chili peppers** and each differs in flavor and heat intensity. Even within each variety, there may differences in how ‘hot’ each particular **chili** is. Typically, larger **chilies** are milder because they contain fewer seeds and less white membrane in proportion to their size. Most varieties can be found fresh, dried, or canned.

- **Chilies** are available year round. When selecting **chilies**, look for glossy **chilies** with firm, unwrinkled skin and fresh green stems. Dried **hot peppers** should be glossy yet unbroken.
- Fresh **chilies** should be stored unwashed and wrapped in paper towels in the refrigerator for up to three weeks. Dried **chilies** should be stored in airtight containers at room temperature for a maximum of four months. To keep dried **chilies** for more than four months, store them in the refrigerator.

Peppers Tips

- Peppers can be added to salads, sautéed in a pan for a healthy addition to scrambled eggs or egg white omelets, or try adding them to soups!
- Place slices of bell peppers in a baggie to make a healthy, colorful, portable snack!
- Store cleaned, chopped veggies like peppers, broccoli, cauliflower, and tomatoes in your refrigerator. Then just dip them in a low fat dip for a fast and healthy snack.
- To add a smoky flavor to whole wheat pasta or chicken dishes, place grilled (or broiled) bell peppers on top. Grilled peppers also make a great side dish!

Peppers Recipe!

Turkey-Apple Whole Wheat Gyros – Easy to Make, Very Tasty, and Full of Nutritious Foods!!

Makes 6 servings

Ingredients

- 1 medium golden delicious apple, cored and thinly sliced
- 2 Tbsp. fresh lemon juice (or bottled lemon juice)
- 1 cup thinly sliced onion
- 1 medium red bell pepper cut into thin strips
- 1 medium green bell pepper cut into thin strips
- 1 Tbsp. extra virgin olive oil
- 8 oz. cooked turkey breast, cut into thin strips (or sandwich turkey meat)
- 6 whole-wheat pita bread rounds, lightly toasted
- ½ cup plain reduced-fat Greek yogurt
- 1 garlic clove minced or 1 tsp. prepared minced garlic

Directions

In a bowl, toss apple slices in lemon juice; set aside. In a large nonstick skillet, cook onion and peppers in hot oil stirring frequently until crisp-tender (warm with a bit of crunch!). Remove from heat, then add apple mixture to skillet mixture, and stir till completely mixed. In small bowl, combine garlic and yogurt. Fill whole-wheat pitas with a bit of turkey, veggie/fruit mixture, and then drizzle with yogurt “sauce.”

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