



Black and White *Nutrition*

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RECIPE

Curry-Spiced Cauliflower
With Breadcrumbs



*Recipes by Jessica Girdwain
and Cheryl Sternman Rule*

*A dietitian dishes on the virtues of
eating black and white, while a blogger
and an author cook in living color.*

RECIPE

Creamy Potato-Carrot Soup



Color your plate. Eat a rainbow. Get your greens and reds.

Chances are you've heard at least one of these sayings telling you how to improve your diet by eating brightly colored foods. But has all of this colorizing made you forget about basic black and white? I hope not. There's an assortment of nutrient-packed white foods and, in recent years, several black foods have been climbing higher on the healthy food lists.

You can probably think of a few white foods. There's cauliflower, white-fleshed potatoes, and bananas (they're white on the inside). But black foods? Of course there are blackberries and black beans but, believe it or not, there's even black rice!

What can all these foods do for you? Plenty!

WHITE FOODS

● **White-fleshed potatoes:** For a long time, potatoes got a bad rap when starchy foods were blamed, in part, for America's obesity epidemic. We now know better. Potatoes can be a source of resistant starch, which, says Lona Sandon, MEd, RD, LD, a spokesperson for the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics, "has been shown to help control blood glucose levels and may help with weight loss by keeping you feeling full longer." Potatoes are also a great source of potassium, which plays a role in regulating blood pressure.

● **Cauliflower:** It may not get the same media hype as its close cousin broccoli, but cauliflower is a star in its own right. Like other cruciferous veggies, this bumpy white ball of nutrition contains several phytonutrients that fight cancer. Its flavor is milder than broccoli, but cauliflower can be enjoyed the same way: steamed with a drizzle of olive oil and a splash of lemon juice or a sprinkle of breadcrumbs. It's also delicious roasted or you can munch on it raw.

● **Bananas:** Bananas are probably best known for being a great source of the mineral potassium. In conjunction with sodium, potassium helps regulate blood pressure. A proper balance of a good amount of potassium and small quantities of sodium tends to result in lower blood pressure. In addition, bananas

are a good source of fiber—just one medium banana has 3 grams of fiber, which can help keep your digestive system on track. There's also some preliminary evidence that eating bananas regularly may help lower your risk of developing diseases such as Alzheimer's.

● **White onions:** Many people think of onions only as a source of flavor and forget they're actually full of nutrients too. "Phytonutrients such as quercetin and allium found in onions are known cancer fighters, and they may even help prevent strokes by keeping blood from clotting and clogging up arteries," says Sandon. Onions can be added to almost anything, including soups, sauces, and ground meat. If you're not crazy about the flavor, bring out their sweetness by sautéing them in a small amount of olive oil until they begin to brown. And onion avoiders may find them more palatable if you grate them into your dishes instead of chopping them into chunks. A microplane grater works best for this.

BLACK FOODS

● **Black beans:** Beans are known for their fiber, but they're also loaded with antioxidants. Both of these nutritional blockbusters make black beans heart-health heroes. They can help keep cholesterol levels in check and protect the body from the free radicals, which damage the body in much the same way that rust forms and spreads on your car. Black beans are great in Latin foods such as rice and beans and burritos. You can also use them in soups and chili and just about any other recipe calling for beans.

● **Blackberries:** While it seems blackberries have taken a back seat to blueberries in popularity, nutritionally speaking they're equals with respect to their health-promoting power. Blackberries may play an important role in cancer prevention. Several studies have shown that berries may help prevent or improve cell damage that may lead to some cancers. They may also play a role in controlling the growth and spread of cancer cells. In addition, berries appear to make tumors more responsive to chemotherapy.

Use them in the same way you would any other berry: sprinkle them onto yogurt or cereal, add

them to muffins or pancakes, or just pop them into your mouth one by one for a sweet treat. They have large seeds for such a small fruit, so be careful when feeding them to very young children.

● **Black sesame seeds:** A common ingredient in Asian cooking, black sesame seeds can be used just as you'd use white sesame seeds, but they're a bit more bitter than their pale counterpart. And, like their ivory-colored cousin, they are a good source of healthy unsaturated fat. Sprinkle them on rolls or salads or in stir-fries. Because of their oil content, it's best to store them in the refrigerator.

● **Black rice:** Like brown rice—and unlike white—black rice retains its hull. Because it undergoes very little processing, it's considered a whole grain, making it great source of fiber and nutrients such as vitamin E. Those nutrients make it a potent weapon against heart disease. Black rice is popular in Asian cooking and can be substituted for any other rice. Cook it as you would brown rice, a little longer and perhaps with more water than you would use for white. In addition to using it as an accompaniment to stir-fries and other dishes, make rice pudding with it for a twist on dessert.

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Black Bean and Goat Cheese Dip

Makes 4 servings

- 1 cup canned black beans, drained and rinsed
- 2 ounces goat cheese
- 1 small garlic clove, minced
- ½ teaspoon fresh lemon juice
- ⅛ teaspoon ground cumin
- Dash hot pepper sauce (or more to taste)
- Freshly ground pepper to taste
- 2 tablespoons fresh chives, chopped, for garnish



Mash black beans in a small bowl with a fork; add goat cheese and stir well to combine. Stir in garlic, lemon juice, cumin, hot sauce, and pepper to taste. (You can also combine the ingredients in a food processor, if desired).

Serve with whole grain crackers or pita chips and garnish with fresh chives.

TD&N Nutrient Analysis: Calories: 110; Total Fat: 4 g; Saturated Fat: 3 g; Polyunsaturated Fat: 0 g; Monounsaturated Fat: 1 g; Cholesterol: 11 mg; Sodium: 74 mg; Carbohydrates: 11 g; Fiber: 4 g; Protein: 7 g

EATING THE RAINBOW

Black and white is great, but there's a case to be made for eating in living color too. Cheryl Sternman Rule, food writer and author of the blog *5 Second Rule*, makes it persuasively and beautifully in her new book, *Ripe: A Fresh, Colorful Approach to Fruits and Vegetables*. You'll want to take a bite out of Paulette Phlipot's photographs, which demonstrate that fruits and vegetables are works of art—brilliant designs that happen to be bundles of nutrients. Rule shares these, just a few of the book's 75 enticing recipes that are arranged by color, from red to white.

