

How to build a healthier burger with mushrooms

March 28 2019, by Len Canter, Healthday Reporter



(HealthDay)—If you're a hamburger lover who no longer wants to eat

meat or simply wants to cut down on beef consumption, there are ways to get the taste and texture of a traditional burger.

Start by experimenting with beef alternatives like firm tofu. Because it takes on the [taste](#) of ingredients in a marinade, you can flavor it with spices and condiments before grilling. Tempeh is another [soy food](#), more grainy than tofu, so you may find it tastes closer to ground beef. Legumes like lentils and beans can be cooked, mashed and shaped into patties and lightly sauteed or skillet-grilled.

But if you're looking for a very simple option with a more familiar, meaty taste, look to [mushrooms](#), especially large Portobello mushrooms whose shape mimics the roundness of a beef patty. They not only make a great tasting burger, they're also high in nutrients, including copper, selenium and many B vitamins.

Here's how to make a savory grilled mushroom burger.

Grilled Portobello "Burgers"

- 2 large Portobello mushroom caps
- Cooking spray
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 2 slices cheddar cheese
- 2 whole-wheat [burger](#) buns
- 1/2 avocado, sliced
- 2 slices tomato
- 2 lettuce leaves

Start by cleaning the mushrooms. Gently brush the caps with a damp cloth or paper towel. Because the gills can have a [bitter taste](#), remove them by scraping them out with a spoon.

Heat your grill and coat with non-stick spray. Coat the mushrooms with cooking spray as well, sprinkle with salt and place them on the grill. Cook four to five minutes, turning often, until tender.

Top with a slice of a hard cheese like cheddar and cook until melted. Transfer to the buns and top with avocado, tomato, lettuce and any other garnishes you like.

Yield: 2 servings

More information: Fruits & Veggies More Matters has more on [mushrooms](#) and delicious ways to cook them.

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Citation: How to build a healthier burger with mushrooms (2019, March 28) retrieved 21 June 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2019-03-healthier-burger-mushrooms.html>

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