

Nutrition Education

Asparagus is a member of the Lily family and is a nutrient packed food that is especially high in folic acid which is a vitamin that is important in preventing neural tube defects, including spina bifida, in newborns. Asparagus is also a good source of potassium, fiber, vitamins B6, A and C, and thiamin.

Oven Roasted Asparagus

Ingredients

- 1 pound asparagus, trimmed
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Pinch of salt and freshly ground black pepper

Directions

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F. Snap or cut the dry stem ends off each asparagus and place on a heavy baking sheet. Drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle with salt and pepper, and toss. Roast until the asparagus is tender, about 15 minutes. Cool slightly and serve warm or at room temperature.

Asparagus for homemade baby food:

1. Prep the asparagus by holding an asparagus spear with one hand in the middle of the spear and place the other hand at the stem. Bend the spear until it snaps. Toss out the lower end that snapped off. Repeat until all your asparagus is "snapped".
2. Wash asparagus under cool water.
3. Place asparagus, "flower" side up into a steamer basket; steam asparagus until very tender.
4. Place into your choice of appliance for pureeing and begin pureeing.
5. Add water as necessary to achieve a smooth, thin consistency.

The tender tops of the steamed asparagus can also be served in small pieces as a finger food for older infants .

