Fuel with Fruits & Vegetables

Activities and Tips

Eat at Least 5 Servings of Fruits & Vegetables in a Day

What is a serving? Sometimes they’re smaller than you think!
- 1 cup raw vegetables or fresh cut up fruit (about the size of a softball)
- Whole fresh fruit about the size of a baseball
- ½ cup cooked or canned vegetables or fruit
- ¼ cup dried fruit

Find more examples at: https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/fruits and https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/vegetables

Tips for fitting in fruits & vegetables
- Keep fruits and vegetables in sight. If you see them, you will eat them! Grapes, oranges, bananas, and apples make a colorful bowl arrangement on the table, or put a bowl of washed fruit in the center of the refrigerator.
- Freeze your produce! Frozen fruit makes a tasty cold treat, and it is also a good way to preserve fruit that is starting to get overripe or is about to go bad.
- Pureed fruit can substitute for half or more of the oil in baked goods. Try applesauce, mashed banana or mango, pumpkin or other soft or cooked fruit.
- Throw vegetables into soup. Add veggies to canned soup or use prepared broth to make your own soup.
- Stir fry a mixture of veggies for a colorful, tasty side dish. For more color and flavor variety, add pineapple or mandarin orange slices. Use frozen veggie mixes or packages of pre-cut veggies from the produce aisle to save time.
- Add frozen veggies to any pasta or noodle dish. Throw them in to cook with the pasta or noodles during the last few minutes. Reduces cooking time and clean up!

Have a Vegetable or Fruit as a Snack

Munch on raw vegetables, fresh or frozen fruit as a snack or try some of these ideas:
- Eat celery with peanut butter.
- Bake or microwave a sweet potato or make baked sweet potato fries.
- Microwave a single-serve frozen vegetable package.
- Layer fruit, yogurt and granola for a tasty parfait.
- Eat raw veggies with a healthy dip like hummus, guacamole or Greek yogurt dip. To make Greek yogurt dip, stir a dry packet of salad dressing mix (like Ranch or other favorite) into 2 cups of plain Greek yogurt, or stir together plain Greek yogurt and salsa, add a little chili powder, red pepper or hot sauce for extra zing
• Dip fruit in yogurt, nut butter, chocolate sauce or pair with a mild flavored cheese.
• A smoothie is a great snack! Use frozen fruit or vegetables for thickness. Smoothie Tip: Puree greens in a food processor or blender, adding a little water to create a smooth consistency. Pour into the ice cube tray and freeze. Once the cubes are frozen, you can leave them in the trays or pop them out into freezer bags. When you’re ready to make your smoothie, just grab a few and throw them in your blender. It’s a great time saver!

**INCLUDE A FRUIT OR VEGETABLE WITH BREAKFAST**

Start your day with a veggie or fruit to make sure you get them in. It’s easier than you think! They provide many vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants that promote good brain health.

• Add veggies such as mushrooms, peppers, spinach, kale or broccoli to your omelet.
• Top oatmeal, cereal, waffles or pancakes with chopped apple or banana or dried fruit. Stir unsweetened applesauce or pumpkin into oatmeal.
• Put salsa on your eggs or in a tortilla with cheese or cottage cheese. Heat for 30 seconds. Did you know that a ¼ cup of salsa is a vegetable serving?
• Make peanut butter toast with banana slices.
• Spread reduced fat cream cheese on a bagel and top with sliced strawberries or apple and a dash of cinnamon.
• Make egg and veggie muffins and toss in the microwave or toaster for a quick option.
• Try these tips for more ways to eat veggies at breakfast: [https://tasty.co/article/emofly/more-vegetables-for-breakfast](https://tasty.co/article/emofly/more-vegetables-for-breakfast)

**TRY A NEW FRUIT OR VEGETABLE OR PREPARE ONE IN A NEW WAY**

Variety makes our food more interesting and provides a wider range of nutrients. Different colors provide different nutrients, so try something new. Or prep a fruit or veggies in a new way and find a different way to enjoy those nutrients! Find some new ideas at your local grocery store or the Farmers Market!

**Here’s some ideas for new ways to try your fruits or vegetables:**

• Add grapes or chopped apples to chicken or tuna salad.
• Grate vegetables like carrots, squash, zucchini and sweet potatoes into things like hamburger patties, meatballs or meatloaf, pasta sauce, pancakes or muffins.
• Add a variety of chopped veggies (raw or cooked) or fruit to tacos, sandwiches, wraps or pitas: greens, tomatoes, carrots, peppers, cucumbers, apples, mango, pineapple, or raisins.
• Oven roast a sheet pan of fresh or frozen vegetables. Eat them warm or cold or add to other dishes such as a salad, in a tortilla, on a sandwich, or tossed with pasta or rice.
• Bake chicken or pork chops with apple wedges, figs, dates, dried apricots, or prunes.
• Top a sweet potato with salsa or chopped dried fruit.
• Add veggies or slices of pineapple or apple to pizza.

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EAT AT LEAST 3 DIFFERENT COLORS OF VEGETABLES AND FRUITS IN 1 DAY

Different colors provide different nutrients. Mix up the colors you eat for a variety of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants. Antioxidants are important for building your immune system, improving recovery from exercise, and supporting brain function including mental health.

- Buy a variety of colors of vegetables and fruits when shopping.
- Eat a different one at each meal.
- Chop up a variety of vegetables and/or fruits as a salad.
- Add fruit or vegetables to other dishes such as tomato slices and greens in a sandwich and mixed peppers in pasta.

EAT ONLY THE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES YOU TRULY LOVE

Eating should be enjoyable in addition to meeting our needs for fuel and nutrients! Take a day and focus on eating only your favorite fruits and vegetables. Mindfully notice what you like about them such as the sweetness, savoriness, temperature, texture, smoothness, crispiness, or how they make your body feel by providing fullness and some fluid.

If you don’t truly love them, we hope some of the tips above can help you find more ways to enjoy fruits and vegetables. Keep working on finding ones you like and focus on appreciating all the good things they do for your body such as providing energy, fiber, volume for fullness, nutrients for metabolism, and boosting your immune system!

MORE TIPS AND RESOURCES

- https://www.myplate.gov/eat-healthy/what-is-myplate
- https://fruitsandveggies.org/
- https://www.fruitsinfo.com/

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