

Fruits and Vegetables

A higher consumption of whole foods rich in nutrients and other compounds, *especially fruits and vegetables*, are associated with a reduced risk of cancers at many sites. Fruits and vegetables provide a good source of fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, folate, potassium, and magnesium. This handout is designed to educate you about fruits and vegetables and suggest ways to eat more each day.

Amount Needed Daily:

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services recommend eating at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables daily.
- National Cancer Institute and Produce for Better Health Foundation created a program
 - “5 a Day for Better Health”
 - Nationwide nutrition campaign
 - Encourage Americans to eat 5+ each day
- The range for both fruits and vegetables is:
 - 2-4 servings of fruits
 - 3-5 servings of vegetables

What is a serving of fruits and vegetables?

According to the National Cancer Institute, one serving includes:

- ✓ 6 oz. of fruit juice
- ✓ 1 piece of fruit
- ✓ ¼ cup dried fruits
- ✓ 1 cup leafy greens
- ✓ ½ c raw or cooked vegetables
- ✓ ½ c beans or peas
- ✓ ½ cup cut-up fruit

Suggestions to get 5-a Day:

- ✓ Vow to try a new fruit or vegetables each week (it could turn out to be your favorite)
- ✓ Eat fruit and drink 100% fruit juice for breakfast

- ✓ Put fruits and vegetables in easy reach, where you will see them easily
 - Out of sight means out of mind
 - Do this at home and at work
 - Store fruits and vegetables on the top shelf of the refrigerator
- ✓ Make vegetables part of a quick dinner
- ✓ Steam or microwave fruits and vegetables for 5 minutes
- ✓ Fruit can be a quick and easy dessert
- ✓ Top cereal with berries, banana, or peach
- ✓ Top yogurt, pancakes or waffles with fruit
- ✓ Pack a piece of fruit, a packet of dried fruit, or a canned fruit snack pack in pocket, briefcase, or backpack so it's there when you want it.
- ✓ Any time is a good time to snack on fruits and vegetables in morning, afternoon, while reading or watching TV.
- ✓ When you shop, buy lots of fresh fruits and vegetables, then stock up on some frozen, canned and dried varieties, so that you don't run out.
- ✓ Add a low-fat salad to lunch
 - One large salad could contain many servings
 - Choose healthier low-fat salad ingredients
 - Avoid mayonnaise, oil, croutons, olives, avocado,

- fried noodles, nuts, bacon, sunflower seeds, regular salad dressings (these all have hidden sources of fat)
- Use low-fat, reduced calorie dressings
 - 1 Tbs regular salad dressing triples a salad's calories
 - 1 ladle of dressing = 2-3 Tbs
 - Eat salads more often and at any time of the day
 - Select a mixture of leafy greens, preferably the darker ones
- ✓ Tips for vegetables that need preparation:
- Steam broccoli spears for 5 min. and sprinkle with lemon juice.
 - Add frozen green peas and corn to a beef stew or chicken casserole for the last 5 minutes of cooking.
 - Stir-fry thin slices of zucchini and yellow squash for 1 minute in 1 tsp of oil, then sprinkle with Parmesan cheese.
 - Pierce a baked or medium sweet potato with a fork in several places; microwave on high 4-5 min. and then serve it with your choice of low-fat toppings, dash of salt, pepper and cinnamon.



