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Healthy Tips to Eat More Fruits and Veggies

Why is it Important to Eat Fruits and Vegetables?

Fruits and vegetables are low in calories and provide essential nutrients and dietary fiber to the diet. Some of the essential nutrients found in fruits and vegetables are vitamin C, vitamin A, potassium, and folate. Vitamin C helps prevent colds, helps to heal cuts and wounds, and keeps teeth and gums healthy. Vitamin A is important for maintaining healthy eye function. Potassium, which is found many foods such as sweet potatoes and bananas, is an essential part of maintaining a healthy blood pressure level. Folate is often found in green vegetables like asparagus and spinach, and is especially important for pregnant women in order to prevent birth defects. Our heart and digestive tract also benefits from the fiber that all fruits and vegetables provide. Eating a well balanced diet that includes a wide variety of fruits and vegetables is the key to maintaining good health.

(CDC, 2012)

Recommendations for Fruits and Vegetables

The recommendations set by the USDA for fruits and vegetables is different for every age and gender. As of 2010, the average American only eats 43% of the recommended fruit they need and only 57% of the recommended vegetables they need each day. How many fruits and vegetables does each member of your family need each day? The USDA makes the following recommendations for fruits and vegetable

Gender	Age	Servings of	Servings of Fruit
Children	2-3	1 cup	1 cup
	4-8	1 1/2 cups	1 to 1 1/2 cups
Girls	9-13	2 cups	1 1/2 cups
	14-18	2 1/2 cups	1 1/2 cups
Boys	9-13	2 1/2 cups	1 1/2 cups
	14-18	3 cups	2 cups
Women	19-50	2 1/2 cups	2 cups
	51+	2 cups	1 1/2 cups
Men	19-50	3 cups	2 cups
	51+	2 1/2 cups	2 cups



Tips to Help You Eat More Fruits and Vegetables

- Top yogurt or oatmeal with fresh berries or apple slices.
- Have an orange, banana, or baby carrots with ranch dressing as a mid-morning snack.
- Eat toasted whole-wheat toast or a waffle with peanut butter and sliced bananas.
- Add bell peppers, broccoli, spinach, mushrooms, and tomatoes to omelets.
- Make a quick stir-fry with frozen vegetables and add chicken or shrimp.
- Add lettuce, tomato, and cucumbers to a sandwich.
- Order side salads or broth based vegetable soups in place of French fries when eating out.

(CDC, 2012)



Additional Resources

- ♦ www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov
- ♦ www.ChooseMyPlate.gov