



FRUITS and VEGETABLES

Eating plenty of fruits and vegetables is healthy, yet most Americans fall short of the recommended daily intake. Here are some reasons to increase your intake and suggestions on how to make that happen.

Why fruits and veggies?

- ✦ High in fiber
- ✦ Great source of vitamins & minerals
- ✦ Low in calorie
- ✦ Low in carbohydrate
- ✦ Low in sodium
- ✦ Phytochemical rich (*found in plant foods with color or aroma*)
- ✦ Fights against chronic disease (heart disease, cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure and obesity)



Eating sufficient fruits and vegetables each day is important for long-term health since they contain nutrients that most other foods groups don't have. These nutrients, including **antioxidants** and **phytonutrients**, fight battles against heart disease and cancer everyday but most people don't know these battles are even happening. If there is a shortage of these nutrients in the body due to a poor intake of fruits and vegetables, then the body won't have enough armies to fight against these chronic diseases that are threatening the body, even at a young age.

How many?

- ✦ Aim for 5 or more servings every day!
- ✦ Remember that any increased intake of fruits and vegetables from what you currently eat is an improvement!

What is a serving?

- ✦ 1 cup leafy greens
- ✦ ½ cup raw, cooked, frozen or canned fruits or vegetables
- ✦ 1 medium fruit (apple, pear)
- ✦ ¼ cup dried fruit
- ✦ ¾ cup juice (*only 1 out of the 9 daily servings should come from juice, due to the high sugar content of juice*)

Tips to increase your intake:

- ✦ Aim for 1/3 of your lunch and dinner plate to be filled with vegetables
- ✦ Choose a food with color at each meal
- ✦ Have a fruit with breakfast, as dessert and for snacks
- ✦ Keep cut-up fruits and vegetables in the refrigerator, as you're much more likely to eat them if they are ready-to-eat
- ✦ Serve vegetables with a healthy dip such as Hidden Valley ranch or hummus to improve taste
- ✦ Serve vegetables first as an "appetizer" before the main entree
- ✦ Start meals with a vegetable based soup or salad