

# FRUIT & VEGETABLE NUTRITION

Fruits and vegetables can be great sources of the following important nutrients.

- **Calcium:** Calcium is essential for healthy bones and teeth. It is also needed for normal functioning of muscles, nerves and some glands.
- **Fiber:** Diets rich in dietary fiber have been shown to have a number of beneficial effects, including decreased risk of coronary heart disease.
- **Folate:** Healthful diets with adequate folate may reduce a woman's risk of having a child with a brain or spinal cord defect.
- **Iron:** Needed for healthy blood and normal functioning of all cells.
- **Magnesium:** Magnesium is necessary for healthy bones and is involved with more than 300 enzymes in your body! Inadequate levels may result in muscle cramps and high blood pressure.
- **Potassium:** Diets rich in potassium may help to maintain a healthy blood pressure.
- **Sodium:** Needed for normal cell function throughout the body. Most diets contain too much sodium which is associated with high blood pressure.
- **Vitamin A:** Keeps eyes and skin healthy and helps protect against infections.
- **Vitamin C:** Helps heal cuts and wounds and keeps teeth and gums healthy.

## Eat a Colorful Variety Every Day

Eating fruits and veggies in a variety of colors — red, dark green, yellow, blue, purple, white and orange — not only provides eye candy but mixing things up also gives them a broad range of nutrients.

How to Create a Rainbow on Your Plate

- Make a tropical rainbow fruit salad with fruits of each color: oranges, pink grapefruit, mango, papaya, kiwifruit, bananas, and purple grapes.
- Saute your own medley of mixed vegetables using each color: red onions, carrots, corn, jicama, broccoli and black beans.
- Try a spinach salad with dried cranberries, canned mandarin oranges and red onion with your favorite vinaigrette.
- Make fruit-sicles: Puree your favorite fruit such as melon, peaches, banana, and/or berries with 100% fruit juice. Freeze in ice cube trays or paper cups or popsicle molds for a refreshing treat. Use fresh, frozen or canned.
- Make a refreshing summer beverage using 100% juice and iced tea.
- Roast a whole head of garlic to make a delicious spread for an appetizer or on sandwiches.
- Steam edamame for a fun snack. Kids love it!
- Make a Greek-inspired salad: romaine lettuce, tomatoes, red onion, chick peas, black olives and artichoke hearts.
- Make confetti coleslaw: shredded green and red cabbage, grated carrots, julienned kohlrabi and finely chopped red and yellow peppers.
- Make a Mexican pizza with tortillas, refried beans, salsa and grated low fat jalapeno cheese. Bake.
- On a busy night, check out the unique combinations of veggies in the frozen section to build a meal – a quick stir-fry, vegetable soup or stew, or a frittata.
- Make a dried fruit and nut mix for snacks. They make great gifts too. Include dried apples, apricots, cranberries, peaches, pears, cherries and mixed nuts.
- Pizza for breakfast? Sure! Top a toasted English muffin with tomato sauce, a scrambled egg and fresh spinach. Add grated Mozzarella and melt.
- Try some different veggie toppings on your pizza:
  - o eggplant and black olive
  - o pineapple and onion
  - o red and green peppers and mushrooms
  - o fresh tomato and spinach
  - o broccoli and green olives
  - o or get the whole shebang

## Fruit and Veggie Daily Intake

### For Women - Fruit and Veggie Daily Intake

Activity Level	Age	Fruits (cups)	Veggies (cups)
<b>WOMEN</b>			
Less Active	19-30	1 1/2	2 1/2
	31-50	1 1/2	2 1/2
	51+	1 1/2	2
Moderately Active	19-50	2	3
	51+	1 1/2	2 1/2
Active	19-50	2	3
	51+	2	3

### For Men- Fruit and Veggie Daily Intake

Activity Level	Age	Fruits (cups)	Veggies (cups)
<b>MEN</b>			
Less Active	19-50	2	3 1/2
	51+	2	3
Moderately Active	19-30	2	3 1/2
	31+	2	3 1/2
Active	19-30	2 1/2	4
	31-51	2 1/2	4
	51+	2 1/2	3 1/2

### For Girls - Fruit and Veggie Daily Intake

Activity Level	Age	Fruits (cups)	Veggies (cups)
<b>GIRLS</b>			
Less Active	2-3	1	1
	4-8	1	1 1/2
	9-13	1 1/2	2
	14-18	1 1/2	2 1/2
Moderately Active	2-3	1	1 1/2
	4-8	1 1/2	2
	9-13	1 1/2	2 1/2

	14-18	2	2 1/2
Active	2-3	1	1 1/2
	4-8	1 1/2	2 1/2
	9-13	1 1/2	3
	14-18	2	3

### For Boys - Fruit and Veggie Daily Intake

Activity Level	Age	Fruits (cups)	Veggies (cups)
<b>BOYS</b>			
Less Active	2-3	1	1
	4-8	1	1 1/2
	9-13	1 1/2	2 1/2
	14-18	2	3
Moderately Active	2-3	1	1 1/2
	4-8	1 1/2	2
	9-13	1 1/2	3
	14-18	2	3 1/2
Active	2-3	1	1 1/2
	4-8	1 1/2	2 1/2
	9-13	2	3 1/2
	14-18	2 1/2	4

### Why eat MORE fruits and veggies?

10. Color & Texture. Fruits and veggies add color, texture ... and appeal ... to your plate.
9. Convenience. Nutritious in any form - fresh, frozen, canned, dried and 100% juice, so they're ready when you are!
8. Fiber. Fruits and veggies provide fiber that helps fill you up and keeps your digestive system happy.
7. Low in Calories. Fruits and veggies are naturally low in calories.
6. May Reduce Disease Risk. Eating plenty of fruits and veggies may help reduce the risk of many diseases, including heart disease, high blood pressure, and some cancers.
5. Vitamins & Minerals. Fruits and veggies are rich in vitamins and minerals that help you feel healthy and energized.
4. Variety. Fruits and veggies are available in an almost infinite variety...there's always something new to try!
3. Quick, Natural Snack. Fruits and veggies are nature's treat and easy to grab for a snack.
2. Fun to Eat! Some crunch, some squirt, some you peel ... some you don't, and some grow right in your own backyard!
1. Taste Great!

### References:

Produce for Better Health Foundation (PBH), (2010). In Why Fruits & Veggies?. Retrieved June 1, 2010, from <http://www.fruitsand-veggiesmorematters.org>