

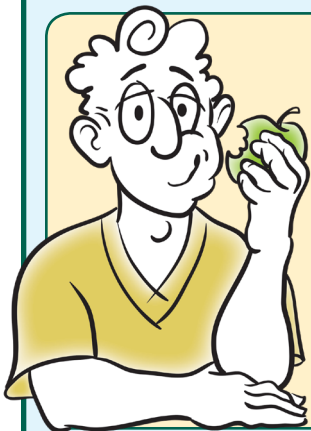
Fruits & Vegetables: One Dynamic Duo

Remember when your mom insisted that you “eat your vegetables so you’ll grow up big and strong,” or packed an apple or banana with your lunch? Turns out mom was a pretty smart cookie about good nutrition!

The health benefits of a diet rich in vegetables and fruits are numerous: lower blood pressure; reduced risk of diabetes, heart disease and stroke; cancer prevention; improved vision; and better digestion. It will also have a positive effect upon your blood sugar, which will keep food cravings in check. (If you’re trying to lose weight, eat non-starchy vegetables and fruits like apples, pears, and green leafy vegetables.)

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, adult women should eat 2-2.5 cups of vegetables per day, and men should eat 2.5-3 cups daily – and more if you exercise over 30 minutes every day. As for fruit, most adults should eat, on average, two cups per day. Visit ChooseMyPlate.gov for specific age and portion information.

Of course, fruits and vegetables are just part of a healthy diet, so don’t neglect other necessary components of better health, such as protein, grains, and dairy. And it’s always a good idea to review your current diet with your family doctor at your annual wellness exam, to ensure that you’re meeting your specific nutrition needs.



Making Fruits & Vegetables Part of Your Daily Diet

Accessibility, variety, and color – all among the ways to help you eat healthier fare.

- **Keep fruit handy.** Place several whole fruits in a bowl or store chopped fruits in a bowl in the refrigerator.
- **Don’t be afraid to try new produce.** Variety is key to a healthy diet.
- **Get colorful.** Try to get at least one daily serving from each of the following categories: dark green leafy vegetables; yellow or orange fruits/vegetables; red fruits/vegetables; beans and peas; and citrus fruits.
- **Make it a meal.** Try cooking new recipes that include more vegetables.
- **Skip the potatoes.** Choose vegetables with different nutrients and more slowly digested carbohydrates.

SOURCES: Harvard School of Public Health, ChooseMyPlate.gov