

# Eat *More* Fruits and Vegetables



Your mother probably told you when you were growing up to eat your fruits and vegetables. As it turns out, it's good advice. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), healthy diets rich in fruits and vegetables may reduce the risk of cancer and other chronic diseases. Additionally, fruits and vegetables provide vitamins, minerals, fiber, and other nutrients important for overall health.

## How Much Is Enough?

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) recommends filling half of your plate with fruits and vegetables at every meal. Most Americans consume less than the USDA's recommendation. To find out how much you and each member of your family should eat daily based on age, gender and physical activity, visit [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov).

## Stay Stocked

The best way to ensure you and your family eat more fruits and vegetables is to always have them available.

**Choose in season** – Fruits and vegetables will be at their peak flavor and often cost much less than other times of the year.

**Consider canned** – Look for fruits packed in water or 100 percent fruit juice with no added sugars, and vegetables labeled low sodium or no salt added.

**Buy frozen** – Frozen fruits and vegetables last for months and are easy to prepare.

**Fill a bowl** – Keep a fruit bowl on the table filled with apples, bananas or oranges. It's an easy snack that's always within reach.

## Easy Additions

Get creative at mealtime! Vegetables don't have to be a boring, steamed side dish. Try one of these ideas for your next meal:

- Include a green salad with your dinner every night.
- Shred carrots or zucchini into meatloaf, casseroles, quick breads, and muffins.
- Include chopped vegetables in pasta sauce or lasagna.
- Order a veggie pizza with mushrooms, green peppers and onions.
- Grill vegetable kabobs using tomatoes, mushrooms, green peppers, and onions.

Along with fruits and vegetables, a healthy diet also includes whole grains, fat-free or low-fat milk products, lean meats, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts, and is low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt, and added sugars. If you aren't eating fruits and vegetables daily, start by slowly adding them into your diet. By eating a balanced diet, you can help maintain your body's health naturally.



Keep a fruit bowl on the table filled with apples, bananas or oranges for a quick and easy snack.

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