

The Message Is Clear: Eat More Fruits and Vegetables for Better Health

Hundreds of scientific studies from decades of research have shown that a diet rich in fruits and vegetables may reduce the risk of cancer and other diseases (including heart disease, stroke, and diabetes). According to the National Cancer Institute, serious diseases that are linked to what we eat kill an estimated three out of four Americans each year.

Eating a diet that contains 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables a day as part of a healthy, active lifestyle lowers the risk for these serious diseases. Unfortunately, most Americans don't eat enough fruits and vegetables to keep them healthy.

The **5 A Day For Better Health* campaign offers these tips to help you and your family enjoy fruits and vegetables throughout the day.

- Add ½ cup fresh fruit to your cereal or pancakes each morning..
- Add vegetables (bell peppers, broccoli, spinach, mushrooms, tomatoes, tec.) to your egg or egg white omelet.
- Top toasted whole-grain bread with peanut butter and sliced bananas.
- Add ½ cup chopped vegetables (per serving) to your favorite casserole.
- Fill celery with low-fat cream cheese or peanut butter and add raisins.
- Whip up a fruit smoothie using 1 cup chopped fresh fruit, ½ cup skim milk, a dash of cinnamon, a dab of honey, and ice.
- Add chopped apples, pears, or raisins to your salad.
- Add ½ cup chopped vegetables (per serving) to instant or canned soup.
- Stock your freezer with 100% fruit juice pops.
- Add zest to ½ cup of your favorite steamed vegetables by seasoning them with flavored vinegar and/or herbs.
- Keep fresh fruits at your desk and in your kitchen.
- Top low-fat ice cream or frozen yogurt with ½ cup berries or other fruit.
- Sprinkle apple slices with cinnamon.
- Top berries with low-fat yogurt.
- Take single servings of applesauce, raisins, or dried fruit to work.
- Load up your sandwich with fresh veggies.
- Make a veggie pizza with your kids. They will love making funny faces with assorted vegetables.
- When dining out, ask for substitutions. In addition to those listed on the menu, ask for fruits and vegetables that are not listed, they may be available.
- Use peanut butter and yogurt as a dip for apple and banana slices.
- Choose a bag of dried fruit instead of your usual bag of chips.
- Add finely chopped or grated veggies to your spaghetti sauce.
- If your family is hungry before a meal is ready, cut up some carrot or celery sticks for them to snack on while they wait.
- Add fruit to your favorite gelatin.
- Try a new vegetable recipe each week.
- Keep ready-to-eat raw vegetables handy in a clear container in the front of your refrigerator.
- Freeze summer fruits for more variety during winter months.
- Try a new fruit or vegetable each month.
- Serve vegetables at the beginning of a meal when everyone is the hungriest.
- End a meal with fresh fruit instead of dessert.

** The 5 A Day program is a joint initiative of many public and private partners including the National Cancer Institute, Produce for Better Health Foundation, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, to increase consumption of fruits and vegetables to at least five servings daily for better overall health.*

Source:

National Cancer Institute, <http://www.cancer.gov/newscenter/tip-sheet-diet-related-diseases>.

Produce for Better Health Foundation, <http://www.5aday.org>.

Centers for Disease Control, <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/tips/index.html>.