Eat Right

Food, Nutrition and Health Tips from the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

20 Ways to Enjoy More Fruits and Vegetables

Building a healthy plate is easy when you make half your plate fruits and vegetables. It's also a great way to add color, flavor and texture plus vitamins, minerals and fiber. All this is packed in fruits and vegetables that are low in calories and fat. Make 2 cups of fruit and 2 ½ cups of vegetables your daily goal. Try the following tips to enjoy more fruits and vegetables every day.

1. Variety abounds when using vegetables as pizza topping. Try broccoli, spinach, green peppers, tomatoes, mushrooms and zucchini.
2. Mix up a breakfast smoothie made with low-fat milk, frozen strawberries and a banana.
3. Make a veggie wrap with roasted vegetables and low-fat cheese rolled in a whole-wheat tortilla.
4. Try crunchy vegetables instead of chips with your favorite low-fat salad dressing for dipping.
5. Grill colorful vegetable kabobs packed with tomatoes, green and red peppers, mushrooms and onions.
6. Add color to salads with baby carrots, grape tomatoes, spinach leaves or mandarin oranges.*
7. Keep cut vegetables handy for mid-afternoon snacks, side dishes, lunch box additions or a quick nibble while waiting for dinner. Ready-to-eat favorites: red, green or yellow peppers, broccoli or cauliflower florets, carrots, celery sticks, cucumbers, snap peas or whole radishes.

8. Place colorful fruit where everyone can easily grab something for a snack-on-the-run. Keep a bowl of fresh, just ripe whole fruit in the center of your kitchen or dining table.

9. Get saucy with fruit. Puree apples, berries, peaches or pears in a blender for a thick, sweet sauce on grilled or broiled seafood or poultry, or on pancakes, French toast or waffles.

10. Stuff an omelet with vegetables. Turn any omelet into a hearty meal with broccoli, squash, carrots, peppers, tomatoes or onions with low-fat sharp cheddar cheese.

11. "Sandwich" in fruits and vegetables. Add pizzazz to sandwiches with sliced pineapple, apple, peppers, cucumber and tomato as fillings.

12. Wake up to fruit. Make a habit of adding fruit to your morning oatmeal, ready-to-eat cereal, yogurt or toaster waffle.

13. Top a baked potato with beans and salsa or broccoli and low-fat cheese.

14. Microwave a cup of vegetable soup as a snack or with a sandwich for lunch.

15. Add grated, shredded or chopped vegetables such as zucchini, spinach and carrots to lasagna, meat loaf, mashed potatoes, pasta sauce and rice dishes.

16. Make fruit your dessert: Slice a banana lengthwise and top with a scoop of low-fat frozen yogurt. Sprinkle with a tablespoon of chopped nuts.

17. Stock your freezer with frozen vegetables to steam or stir-fry for a quick side dish.

18. Make your main dish a salad of dark, leafy greens and other colorful vegetables. Add chickpeas or edamame (fresh soybeans). Top with low-fat dressing.*

19. Fruit on the grill: Make kabobs with pineapple, peaches and banana. Grill on low heat until fruit is hot and slightly golden.

20. Dip: Whole wheat pita wedges in hummus, baked tortilla chips in salsa, strawberries or apple slices in low-fat yogurt, or graham crackers in applesauce.

**See "Color Your Plate with Salad" at www.eatright.org/nutritiontipsheets for more tips on creating healthy salads*

For a referral to a registered dietitian and for additional food and nutrition information visit www.eatright.org.

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The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is the world's largest organization of food and nutrition professionals. The Academy is committed to improving the nation's health and advancing the profession of dietetics through research, education and advocacy.

This tip sheet is provided by:

Department of State Health Services
Texas WIC
WIC Wellness Works

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