



# Eating Fruits and Vegetables

Part of a Nutrition Education Series by the Food Stamp Nutrition Education Program

Fruits and vegetables have many of the vitamins, minerals, and fiber that we need to stay healthy. They can also be very easy to prepare. Each day you should eat:

- 2-4 servings of fruit
- 3-5 servings of vegetables

## How much is a serving?

- 1 medium sized piece of fruit
- ½ cup fruit or vegetables
- ¾ cup 100% fruit or vegetable juice
- 1 cup raw leafy greens

## Fiber

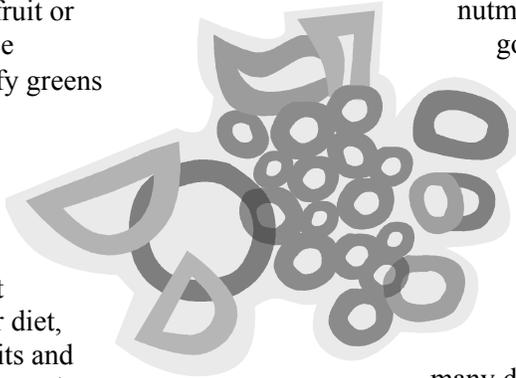
Fiber is an important part of fruits and vegetables. To get more fiber in your diet, eat the peel of fruits and vegetables such as apples, pears, peaches, potatoes, and tomatoes.

## Preparing fruits and vegetables

Frozen and canned fruits and vegetables are as nutritious as fresh. They can also be ready to eat quickly. Most vegetables can be steamed, stir-fried, or microwaved and ready to eat in 10 minutes or less. Cooking for a short amount of time in a small amount of water also saves nutrients. Cooking food in larger pieces also helps keep most of the nutrients in the food.

## Dressing up fruits and vegetables:

- Serve raw with a dip. Plain or vanilla yogurt is a good dip for fruits. Salad dressings or yogurt to which herbs have been added is a good dip for vegetables.
- Cook with seasonings for more flavor. Lemon or lime juice adds flavor to fruits and helps them keep their color. Cinnamon, nutmeg and ginger are good spices for most fruits.



Vegetables can be seasoned with onion, garlic, red or black pepper, or many different herbs.

## Quick tips for fruits and vegetables:

Here are some quick and easy ways to get more fruits and vegetables in your diet:

- Add a few of your favorite vegetables such as carrots, tomatoes, or cucumbers to cooked macaroni and chill for an easy salad. Oil and vinegar makes an inexpensive dressing.
- Grate carrots and mix with raisins and mayonnaise to make carrot raisin salad.
- Mix chopped cabbage, onions and carrots with mayonnaise and pickle juice to make coleslaw.
- Add canned or frozen vegetables to rice, pasta sauce, or soups.

- Marinate canned or frozen vegetables in salad dressing for an easy salad.
- Defrost frozen fruit for a quick snack.
- Make fruit salad with a variety of your favorite fruits.
- Add fresh or canned fruits to oatmeal, yogurt, or cereal.

## Preparation Safety Tips

Always wash fresh fruits and vegetables before cooking or eating raw to remove dirt and bacteria. Slice or cut produce on a clean surface with clean utensils.

## Cooking Safety Tips

Cooking is fun but can be dangerous. Use potholders to remove hot pans from the stove or oven. Keep arms and hands out of the way when removing foil or plastic wrap from cooked foods so that the steam does not burn you.



For more food & nutrition information, contact your local extension office. For more information on Food Stamps, contact DSS at 1-800-768-5700.

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