

The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of various fruits and vegetables in a flat, stylized style. The items include apples, pomegranates, lemons, carrots, pears, pineapples, cherries, and leafy greens, scattered across a light yellow background. A solid orange horizontal bar is positioned above the main title.

Increase Your Fruits and Vegetables!

July 2018

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Fruits & Vegetables 101

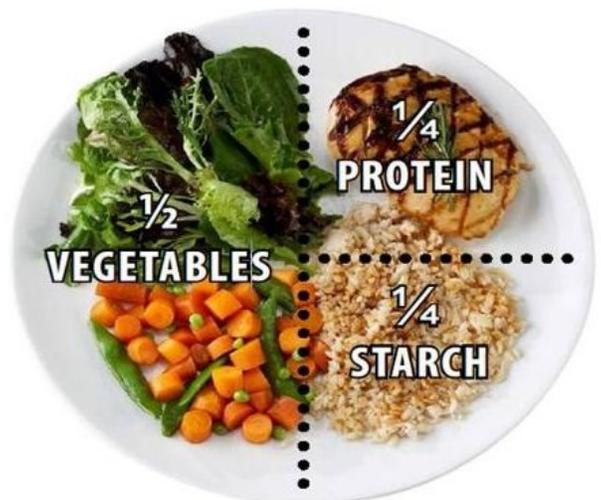
Why are fruits and vegetables so good for us, anyway?

Here are a few of the main benefits of eating fruits and vegetables:

- **Fiber** - Fiber promotes balanced blood sugar, helps us feel full after eating, and feeds the good bacteria in our gut. All of this helps reduce disease risk.
- **Antioxidants**- Fruits and vegetables are loaded with antioxidants, compounds found in food that help prevent or lessen damage to our cells.
- **Vitamins & Minerals** - Fruits and vegetables provide many vitamins and minerals that are challenging to get from other foods, especially Vitamin C, potassium, Vitamin K, and folate.
- **Phytochemicals** - This is a fancy name for the many natural compounds that give plants their color, smell, and taste. Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables is important since each color offers different benefits!

5 a Day

It is recommended to get at least five servings of fruits and vegetables combined, or 2 servings of fruit and 3 servings of vegetables per day. An easy way to do this is to fill half of your plate with vegetables at both lunch and dinner, and have fruit with breakfast or snacks!



Serving Sizes

- 3/4 cup (6 oz.) 100% fruit or vegetable juice
- 1 medium piece of fruit (apple, orange, banana)
- 1/4 cup dried fruit
- 1/2 cup raw, cooked, frozen, or canned fruit
- 1 cup raw leafy vegetables (salad greens)
- 1/2 cup raw, cooked, frozen or canned vegetables
- 1/2 cup cooked, canned or frozen peas and beans

The Mediterranean Diet

The Mediterranean Diet is inspired by the traditional way of eating in the countries of the Mediterranean. It has been associated with lower blood pressure, balanced blood sugar, reduced cardiovascular disease, lower cancer risk, and weight loss. This eating pattern emphasizes lots of fruits and vegetables, healthy fats, lean protein, and eating meals with family and friends.

The following tips should help you get started in following a Mediterranean Diet:

1. Eat lots of veggies!

Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables each week. Fill half of your plate with vegetables at each meal.

2. Treat meat as the side dish or garnish.

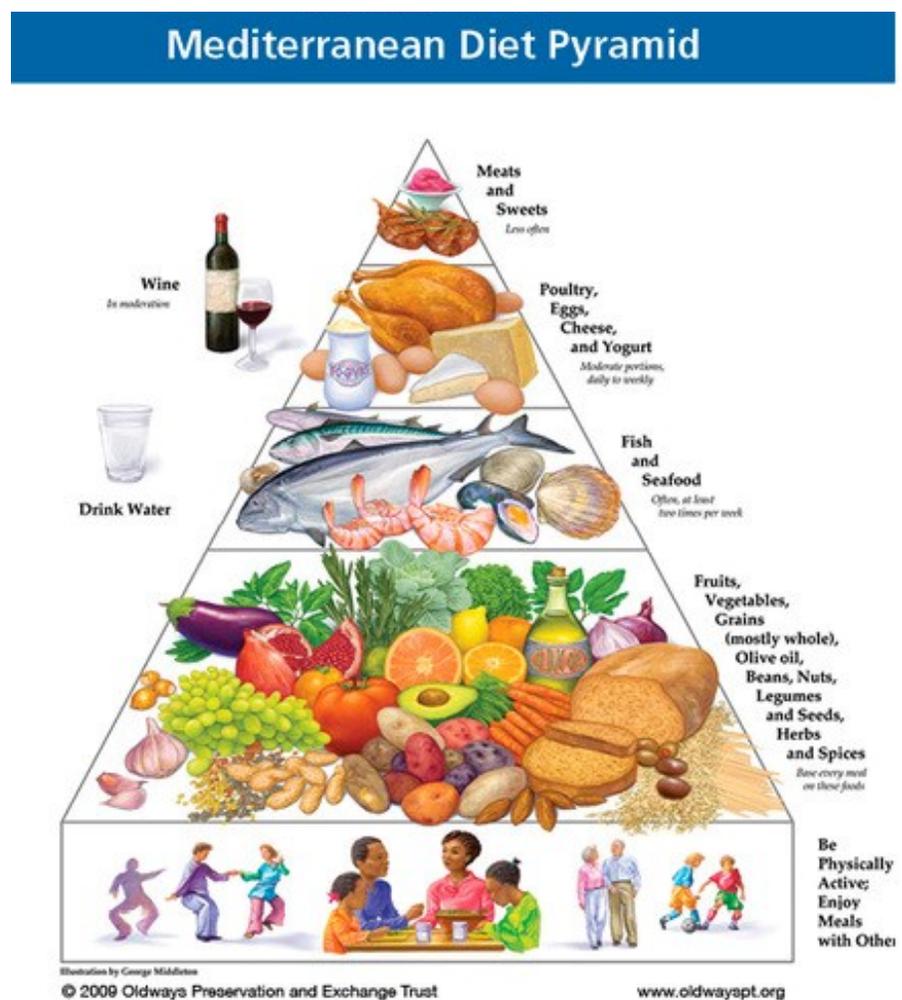
Add strips of steak to a beautiful salad or vegetable stir fry.

3. Cook a vegetarian meal one night a week.

Use beans, whole grains, and vegetables to create a meat-less meal. Experiment with different herbs and spices.

4. Eat fresh fruit for dessert.

Most nights of the week, choose fruit for dessert. When you do have ice cream, add in some fresh berries!



Confetti Quinoa Salad

Try this easy to prepare dish inspired by the Mediterranean Diet! Quinoa is a heart-healthy grain and protein source. Mix in some frozen (or fresh!) vegetables, and you have a colorful dish in 25 minutes!

Time: 25 minutes **Serves:** 6 (½-cup servings)

Cooked quinoa (from recipe below)

1 cup frozen mixed vegetables such as peas, carrots, green beans, corn, etc., thawed

1 tablespoon lemon juice

1 tablespoon olive oil

Salt & pepper to taste

Gently mix quinoa, vegetables, lemon juice, and olive oil together. Taste and season, if necessary. Serve alone or with an additional protein source, such as chicken, seafood, tofu, or feta cheese.

Directions for cooking quinoa:

1 cup quinoa

1 1/2 cups water (or low-sodium vegetable or chicken stock)

1/2 teaspoon salt

Place quinoa, water, and salt into a pot. Bring to a boil. Once boiling, turn heat down to simmer and cover with lid. Cook for 20 minutes. Remove from heat, fluff with fork, and serve.



Source: <https://www.babble.com/best-recipes/confetti-quinoa-salad-a-whole-grain-recipe-kids-will-love/>



10 tips
Nutrition
Education Series

add more vegetables to your day



10 tips to help you eat more vegetables

It's easy to eat more vegetables! Eating vegetables is important because they provide vitamins and minerals and most are low in calories. To fit more vegetables in your meals, we're encouraging them as snacks as well, not just meals.

1 discover fast ways to cook

Cook fresh or frozen vegetables in the microwave for a quick-and-easy dish to add to any meal. Steam green beans, carrots, or broccoli in a bowl with a small amount of water in the microwave for a quick side dish.

2 be ahead of the game

Cut up a batch of bell peppers, carrots, or broccoli. Pre-package them to use when time is limited. You can enjoy them on a salad, with a hummus dip, or in a veggie wrap.



6 make your garden salad glow with color

Brighten your salad by using colorful vegetables such as black beans, sliced red bell peppers, shredded radishes, chopped red cabbage, carrots, or watercress. Your salad will not only look good but taste good, too.



7 sip on some vegetable soup

Heat it and eat it. Try tomato, butternut squash, or garden vegetable soup. Look for reduced- or low-sodium soups. Make your own soups with a low-sodium broth and your favorite vegetables.

3 choose vegetables rich in color

Brighten your plate with vegetables that are red, orange, or dark green. They are full of vitamins and minerals. Try acorn squash, cherry tomatoes, sweet potatoes, or collard greens. They not only taste great but also are good for you, too.

4 check the freezer aisle

Frozen vegetables are quick and easy to use and are just as nutritious as fresh veggies. Try adding frozen vegetables, such as corn, peas, green beans, or spinach to your favorite dish. Look for frozen vegetables without added sauces, gravies, butter, or cream.

5 stock up on veggies

Canned vegetables are a great addition to any meal, so keep on hand canned tomatoes, kidney beans, garbanzo beans, mushrooms, and beets. Select those labeled as "reduced sodium," "low sodium," or "no salt added."



8 while you're out

If dinner is away from home, no need to worry. When ordering, ask for an extra side of vegetables or side salad instead of the typical fried side dish. Ask for toppings and dressings on the side.

9 savor the flavor of seasonal vegetables

Buy vegetables that are in season for maximum flavor at a lower cost. Check your local supermarket specials for the best-in-season buys. Or visit your local farmer's market.



10 try something new

Choose a new vegetable that you've never tried before. Find recipes online at www.WhatsCooking.fns.usda.gov.

10 tips

Nutrition Education Series

smart shopping for veggies and fruits



10 tips for affordable vegetables and fruits

It is possible to fit vegetables and fruits into any budget. Making nutritious choices does not have to hurt your wallet. Getting enough of these foods promotes health and can reduce your risk of certain diseases. There are many low-cost ways to meet your fruit and vegetable needs.

1 celebrate the season

Use fresh vegetables and fruits that are in season.

They are easy to get, have more flavor, and are usually less expensive. Your local farmer's market is a great source of seasonal produce.



2 why pay full price?

Check the local newspaper, online, and at the store for sales, coupons, and specials that will cut food costs. Often, you can get more for less by visiting larger grocery stores (discount grocers if available).

3 stick to your list

Plan out your meals ahead of time and make a grocery list. You will save money by buying only what you need. Don't shop when you're hungry. Shopping after eating will make it easier to pass on the tempting snack foods. You'll have more of your food budget for vegetables and fruits.

4 try canned or frozen

Compare the price and the number of servings from fresh, canned, and frozen forms of the same veggie or fruit. Canned and frozen items may be less expensive than fresh. For canned items, choose fruit canned in 100% fruit juice and vegetables with "low sodium" or "no salt added" on the label.



5 buy small amounts frequently

Some fresh vegetables and fruits don't last long. Buy small amounts more often to ensure you can eat the foods without throwing any away.

6 buy in bulk when items are on sale

For fresh vegetables or fruits you use often, a large size bag is the better buy. Canned or frozen fruits or vegetables can be bought in large quantities when they are on sale, since they last much longer.

7 store brands = savings

Opt for store brands when possible. You will get the same or similar product for a cheaper price. If your grocery store has a membership card, sign up for even more savings.

8 keep it simple

Buy vegetables and fruits in their simplest form. Pre-cut, pre-washed, ready-to-eat, and processed foods are convenient, but often cost much more than when purchased in their basic forms.



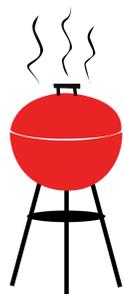
9 plant your own

Start a garden—in the yard or a pot on the deck—for fresh, inexpensive, flavorful additions to meals. Herbs, cucumbers, peppers, or tomatoes are good options for beginners. Browse through a local library or online for more information on starting a garden.



10 plan and cook smart

Prepare and freeze vegetable soups, stews, or other dishes in advance. This saves time and money. Add leftover vegetables to casseroles or blend them to make soup. Overripe fruit is great for smoothies or baking.



Get Fired Up for



National Grilling Month!

July is National Grilling Month! We hope these recipes inspire you to pair up some healthy sides with your grilled steaks, hamburgers, and hotdogs!

Grilled Corn Salad with Avocado and Tomato

Simple and healthy recipe that is perfect for summer barbecues.

YIELD: 6 servings (1 cup per serving)

PREP TIME: 25 minutes

INGREDIENTS

FOR THE GRILLED CORN SALAD:

5 ears fresh corn, husked with silks removed
1 1/2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
2 teaspoons kosher salt
3/4 teaspoon black pepper
2 cups halved cherry tomatoes
2 cups packed arugula
1 medium avocado, peeled, pitted, and diced
1/4 cup chopped fresh cilantro

FOR THE DRESSING:

1/4 cup fresh lime juice (about 2 limes)
2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
1 tablespoon honey
1 teaspoon paprika
3/4 teaspoon kosher salt
1/4 teaspoon black pepper
1/4 teaspoon onion powder

DIRECTIONS

1. Preheat the grill to 400 degrees F. Rub the corn with olive oil and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Grill corn for 7 minutes, turning every few minutes, until ears are lightly browned. Remove from grill and let cool.
2. Carefully cut the kernels from the cob and transfer them to a large mixing bowl. Add the cherry tomatoes, arugula, avocado, and cilantro.
3. In a small bowl, stir together the lime juice, olive oil, honey, paprika, salt, pepper, and onion powder. Pour over the salad and toss to combine. Serve at room temperature.
4. Store leftovers in the refrigerator for 2 to 3 days. The arugula will wilt and the avocado will brown slightly, but the salad will still taste delicious!

Adapted from: <https://www.wellplated.com/grilled-corn-salad/>



Grilled Vegetable Platter

Impress your guests with this colorful and tasty spread of grilled vegetables.

YIELD: 6 servings

PREP TIME: 2 hours

INGREDIENTS

MARINADE:

- 1/4 cup olive oil
- 2 tablespoons honey
- 4 teaspoons balsamic vinegar
- 1 teaspoon dried oregano
- 1/2 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/8 teaspoon pepper
- Dash of salt

VEGETABLES:

- 1 pound fresh asparagus, trimmed
- 3 small carrots, cut in half lengthwise
- 1 large sweet red pepper, cut into 1-inch strips
- 1 medium yellow summer squash, cut into 1/2-inch slices
- 1 medium red onion, cut into wedges

DIRECTIONS

1. In a small bowl, whisk the marinade ingredients together. Place 3 tablespoons marinade in a large re-sealable plastic bag. Add cut vegetables, seal bag, and turn to coat vegetables thoroughly. Marinate 1-1/2 hours at room temperature.
2. Heat grill to 400 degrees F. Transfer vegetables to a grilling grid; place grid on grill rack. Grill vegetables, covered, 8-12 minutes or until crisp-tender, turning occasionally.
3. Place vegetables on large serving platter. Drizzle with remaining marinade.

Source: <https://www.tasteofhome.com/recipes/grilled-vegetable-platter>



Grilled Peaches with Honey Cream

A refreshing grilled dessert. Replace peaches with nectarines or apricots, if desired.

YIELD: 4 servings (1/4 cup raspberries, 2 tablespoons yogurt mixture, and 2 peach halves per serving)

PREP TIME: 25 minutes

INGREDIENTS

- 2 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
- 2 tablespoons honey, divided
- 1/4 teaspoon ground cardamom
- Dash of kosher salt
- 4 medium peaches, pitted and halved
- 1/4 cup mint leaves, sliced thinly
- 1/3 cup plain fat-free Greek yogurt
- 2 1/2 tablespoons half-and-half
- 1/4 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1 cup raspberries

DIRECTIONS

1. Combine melted butter, 1 tablespoon honey, cardamom, and salt in a medium bowl. Add peaches and toss to coat. Let stand for 5 minutes.
2. Heat grill to 375 degrees F. Place peach halves on grill and cook 2 minutes on each side, or until grill marks appear.
3. Combine yogurt, half-and-half, 1 tablespoon honey, and vanilla in small bowl. Whisk together. Serve with peaches and raspberries. Garnish with mint leaves.

Source: <http://www.myrecipes.com/recipe/grilled-peaches-honey-cream>



Resources

Harvard Healthy Eating Plate

- <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/healthy-eating-plate/>
- <https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/what-should-you-eat/vegetables-and-fruits/>

Mediterranean Diet

- <https://www.mayoclinic.org/healthy-lifestyle/nutrition-and-healthy-eating/in-depth/mediterranean-diet/art-20047801>
- <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/mediterranean-diet-meal-plan#section7>
- <https://oldwayspt.org/traditional-diets/mediterranean-diet>

MyPlate

- <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/vegetables>
- <https://www.choosemyplate.gov/fruit>



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<http://www.med.umich.edu/pfans/services/tip.html>