



Health is a treasure

Fruits and Vegetables

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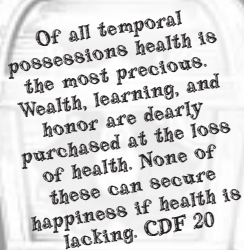
Fruits and vegetables are as old as creation (Genesis 1:29-30), but have not been given notoriety until recent years.

Even for some vegetarians, fruit and vegetable intake has been low like the diet of other Americans. Recent studies have revealed that only one person in eleven is eating the recommended daily portions. Today science has a better understanding of the reasons why fruits and vegetables should constitute a large part of the diet.


Fruits and vegetables contribute Vitamins A (and beta-carotene) and Vitamin C which are powerful antioxidants offering protection against cancer. They also contain significant amounts of Folic acid and Vitamin B6, which have been shown to lower homocysteine levels, thus reducing the risk of heart disease. Minerals such as potassium, calcium, magnesium, and selenium are found in fruits and vegetables and play important roles in normal everyday body functioning. They help lower the risks of many health problems. Additionally fruits and vegetables provide good sources of complex carbohydrates, fiber and phytochemicals. They are low in fat especially saturated fat, contain no cholesterol, are low in calories and sodium thus providing excellent protection against heart disease, hypertension and obesity.

Many major health agencies are promoting the "5-a-day" campaign as the minimum portions of fruits and vegetables because of their protective effect. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2000 offers this advice: Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables daily. The Food Guide Pyramid recommends 3 to 5 servings of vegetables and 2 to 4 servings of fruit each day. Eating at least the minimum number of servings adds up to five portions daily.

The Creator placed in fruits and vegetables many wonderful health promoting properties. Additionally they add variety, texture, flavor and color to meals. It is our challenge to give them the place in our diet that they deserve.



Of all temporal possessions health is the most precious. Wealth, learning, and honor are dearly purchased at the loss of health. None of these can secure happiness if health is lacking. CDF 20



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Vegetable serving size

- 1 cup of raw leafy vegetables
- 1/2 cup of other vegetables, cooked or chopped raw
- 3/4 cup of vegetable juice

Choose 3-5 servings each day

Fruit serving size

- 1 medium apple, banana, orange
- 1/2 cup of chopped, cooked, or canned fruit
- 3/4 cup of fruit juice

Choose 2-4 servings each day

Which Fruits and Vegetables Provide the Most Nutrients?

Sources of Vitamin A (carotenoids)

- Orange vegetables like carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin
- Dark-green leafy vegetables such as spinach, collards, turnip greens
- Orange fruits like mango, cantaloupe, apricots
- Tomatoes

Sources of Vitamin C

- Citrus fruits and juices, kiwi fruit, strawberries, cantaloupe
- Broccoli, peppers, tomatoes, cabbage, potatoes
- Leafy greens such as romaine lettuce, turnip greens, spinach

Sources of folate

- Cooked dry beans and peas, peanuts
- Oranges, orange juice
- Dark-green leafy vegetables like spinach and mustard greens, romaine lettuce
- Green peas

Sources of potassium

- Baked white or sweet potato, cooked greens (such as spinach), winter (orange) squash
- Bananas, plantains, dried fruits such as apricots and prunes, orange juice
- Cooked dry beans (such as baked beans) and lentils

Source: Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2000

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