

# 7043 - Everyone Can Eat More Fruits and Vegetables!



Do you think eating 5 - 10 servings of fruits and vegetables a day is a lot? It's really not. In fact, most of us only have to add 1 or 2 more servings to reach Health Canada's recommended minimum of 5 servings a day.

Fruits and vegetables come in a variety of shapes, sizes, colours and flavours and can be served in thousands of different ways, raw or cooked. With such versatility it's easy to include them with every meal and snack.

It starts at the grocery store. Pick up a variety of fresh, frozen, canned or dried fruits and vegetables and have them on hand to use throughout the day.

## Breakfast

- Top your cereal, yogurt or pancakes with fruit – fresh, frozen, canned or dried.
- Make a yogurt sundae by layering fruit, cereal and yogurt in a tall glass.
- Sprinkle half a grapefruit with brown sugar and a touch of cinnamon and broil until golden.
- Add berries or other fruit to pancake batter. Grated carrot and zucchini work too.
- Top a toasted half bagel or English muffin with apple or pear slices, sprinkle with cinnamon or nutmeg and add a slice of low fat cheese. Broil until the cheese melts.
- Breakfast is *when* you eat, not *what* you eat. Try leftover pizza with lots of veggies, fruit or vegetable salads, vegetable soups or fruit crumbles.
- Try dipping strips of toast or waffles in applesauce or other fruit sauce. (Kids like this one!) Or use fruit as a substitute for syrup.

## Snacks

- Always have fruits and veggies on hand. Keep them on the counter or in the fridge, washed and ready to go. When fruits and vegetables are in your line of sight, it's easy to choose healthy snacks.
- Vegetables and dip make a good snack. Make the dip with low fat yogurt or a low fat salad dressing. Try carrots, broccoli, cauliflower, mushrooms, pepper strips, zucchini strips and rutabaga.
- Make the vegetables into the dip. Salsa and guacamole are delicious!
- Sliced fruits and berries are also good for dipping. Try bananas, apples, pears, blueberries, strawberries, orange sections and melon cubes. A low fat flavored yogurt or low fat cream cheese makes a good dip.
- Microwave a potato for about 10 minutes. Add low fat sour cream and salsa. Or try sweet potato for a change. Serve with a bit of butter or margarine and cinnamon or nutmeg.
- Try a portable salad! Combine finely shredded cabbage, carrot and sunflower seeds or raisins with a little low fat yogurt or a low calorie dressing. Place in a pita, or on a large lettuce leaf or rice wrapper and roll it up to go!
- Cut an apple or pear in quarters or eighths. Spread one side of each slice with peanut butter, nut butter, butter or a cheese spread. Put two slices together like a sandwich.



## Lunch

- Stuff your sandwiches with a variety of vegetables and fruit like tomatoes, cucumber and leaf lettuce.
- Try something new! Strips of roasted or raw bell peppers, shredded cabbage (or the packaged coleslaw in the produce section), shredded carrots or zucchini, thinly sliced onions, radishes, apples or pears all make good sandwich stuffers. To keep bread from getting soggy, pack the veggies separately and add just before eating.
- Try using mashed avocado or banana as a spread for the bread.
- Add sliced banana or applesauce to peanut butter sandwiches
- Try adding grated carrots, shredded spinach, onions, thinly sliced mushrooms or apple to a grilled cheese sandwich.
- Make it a habit to have a salad every day. Use a variety of greens such as spinach, romaine, endive or a combination. Add a variety of fruits and vegetables in season and top with a low fat dressing or vinaigrette.
- Add extra vegetables to soups and casseroles or microwave leftover vegetables and sprinkle with cheese for a light lunch.

## Dinner

- Double up your servings. If you normally take one spoonful of broccoli, take two. Half a potato? Take a whole one. This will automatically add servings of the vegetables you normally eat.
- Add extra fresh or frozen vegetables to your spaghetti sauce, chili, lasagna, stew or casserole.
- Make pizza at home and add lots of veggies. Try zucchini, summer squash, mushrooms, onions, pepper strips, broccoli, cauliflower, onions, grated carrots, chopped spinach, arugula or pineapple. When ordering pizza ask for extra veggies and half the cheese.
- Add zest to vegetables by adding herbs, butter, a bit of brown sugar, grated cheese, bread or cornflake crumbs. Vegetables are naturally low in fat so you can afford to dress them up in moderation.
- Try fruit for dessert like berries sprinkled with balsamic vinegar and sugar; peaches, plums or apples sprinkled with cinnamon or nutmeg, or apricots with vanilla yogurt.
- Top cakes, puddings or ice cream with a variety of fruits.