



Kinship Link

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Pro Kinship for Kids

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20 Ways to Enjoy More Fruits and Vegetables

As spring has sprung and we are looking to be outside more, so think about putting in that garden this year. This is a great way to get some exercise and eat more fruits and vegetables for your health. 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 dietary fiber. Make 2 cups of fruit and 2 1/2 cups of vegetables your daily goal. Try the following tips to enjoy more fruits and vegetables every day.

- Variety abounds when using vegetables as pizza topping. Try broccoli, spinach, green peppers, tomatoes, mushrooms, and zucchini.
- Mix up a breakfast smoothie made with low-fat milk, and frozen fruit - try strawberries and banana, or mango with pineapple or peach.
- Make a veggie wrap with roasted vegetables and low-fat cheese rolled in a whole-wheat tortilla.
- Try crunchy vegetables instead of chips with your favorite low-fat salad dressing for dipping.
- Grill colorful vegetables kabobs packed with tomatoes, green and red peppers, mushrooms, and onions.
- Add color to salads with baby carrots, grape tomatoes, spinach leaves, or mandarin oranges.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- 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.
- “Sandwich” in fruits and vegetables. Add pizzazz to sandwiches with sliced pineapple, apple, peppers, cucumbers, and tomato as fillings. Add raw or cooked vegetables to tacos on whole-grain corn tortillas and whole wheat wraps.
- Wake up to fruit. Make a habit of adding fruit to your morning oatmeal, ready-to-eat cereal, yogurt, or toaster waffle.
- Top a baked potato with beans and salsa, or broccoli and low-fat cheese.
- Microwave a cup of vegetable soup as a snack or with a sandwich for lunch.
- Add grated, shredded, or chopped vegetables such as zucchini, spinach, eggplant, and carrots to pasta dishes, casseroles, curries, soups, and stews.

20 Ways to Enjoy More Fruits and Vegetables continued

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.



Eat Right with MyPlate

Find your healthy eating routine using these recommendations. Simply start with small changes to make healthier choices you can enjoy.

- ◆ Make half your plate fruits and vegetables as we said above: **Vary your veggies.** Try adding fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables to salads, sides, and main dishes. Choose a variety of colorful veggies prepared in healthful ways: steamed, sautéed, roasted, or raw.



- ◆ Make half your plate fruits and vegetables: **Focus on whole fruits.** Choose whole, cut, or pureed fruits - fresh, frozen, dried, or canned in 100% juice. Enjoy fruit with meals, as snacks, or as a dessert.



- ◆ **Make half your grains whole grains.** Look for whole grains listed first on the ingredient list - try oatmeal, popcorn, teff, quinoa, millet, bulgur, brown rice, or

bread, crackers, and noodles made with whole-grain flours. Limit grain desserts and snacks such as cakes, cookies, and pastries.



- ◆ **Vary your protein routine.** Mix up your protein foods to include seafood, beans, peas and lentils, unsalted nuts and seeds, soy products, eggs, and lean meat and poultry.



- ◆ **Choose foods and beverages with less added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium.** Use the Nutrition Facts Label and ingredients list to limit items high in saturated fat, sodium, and added sugars. Choose vegetable oil instead of butter, and oil-based sauces and dips instead of one with butter, cream, or cheese. Drink water instead of sugary drinks.



- ◆ **Move to low-fat or fat-free dairy milk or yogurt.** Choose fat-free milk, yogurt, and calcium-fortified soymilk to cut back on saturated fat. Replace sour cream, cream, and regular cheese with low-fat or fat-free yogurt, milk, and cheese.



The best choices to maintain a healthier eating pattern are to start simple!

