

Better You Color Your Plate



Adding vegetables and fruits to your diet is one of the best changes you can make to improve your health, control your weight and reduce the risk of chronic illnesses.



Fruits and vegetables provide:

Essential nutrients – Fruits and vegetables are important sources of many nutrients, including vitamin A, vitamin C, folate (folic acid), potassium, magnesium, and fiber.

Antioxidants protect the body from damage caused by harmful molecules called free radicals. Antioxidants are found in colorful fruits and vegetables.

Phytochemicals are chemical compounds produced by plants that may help protect us from disease. Some examples are lycopene in tomatoes, and beta-carotene in carrots.

High volume – foods high in water and fiber, like fruits and vegetables, are called high volume foods. They add bulk to your meals and help you feel full.

Variety, color and texture – Vegetables and fruits lend amazing variety, color and texture to your meals.

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Benefits of fruits & vegetables

Fruits and vegetables provide your body with the vitamins, minerals, fiber and water needed to function properly, so you have more energy and your body is better able to fight off disease. The nutrients and micronutrients found in fruits and vegetables are involved in energy metabolism, vision, the formation of new cells and cell division, the immune system, collagen formation, bone production, and many more processes in the body.



Increase your intake:

- Add fruit to your breakfast and have it for a snack
- Bring a bag of frozen steamed vegetables as part of lunch
- Take a mid-afternoon snack of cut up veggies like carrots, celery or peppers, and dip in hummus, guacamole or a little salad dressing
- Drink tomato juice when you have a salty craving
- Throw a handful of spinach or some avocado into a fruit smoothie
- Try zucchini noodles or spaghetti squash in place of pasta
- Roast a vegetable you didn't like when you were a kid, like Brussels sprouts or beets with a little pure maple syrup
- Make sweet potato or kale chips in the oven with a little spice and a drizzle of olive oil
- Chop mushrooms, onion and garlic and use as a filler for meatloaf or burgers
- Have a potato stuffed with a little chili or cheese and broccoli for dinner, and eat the skin
- Add chopped dates to your oatmeal for a natural way to add sweetness
- Join a CSA (Community Supported Agriculture) for a share of vegetables from a local farm