

HEALTH BEAT 2004

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COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS OF THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT

Q. How can I eat healthier in the New Year?



A. Controlling portion sizes, adding more fruits and vegetables and understanding the basics of healthy eating can help in your New Year's resolution. This newsletter will focus on these issues.

Q. How should I control portion sizes on my dinner plate?

A. One half of your dinner plate should be fruits and vegetables, one fourth should consist of whole grains and the remaining one-fourth should consist of lean meat or protein. Fats, oils and sweets should be used sparingly.



Q. How can I eat healthier when dining out?

A. If you get a large or supersized meal, share it with a friend or take half home. Avoid buffets. Ask for heart healthy menu items or for baked, broiled or steamed foods. Skip or limit breads, rolls and tortilla chips. Ask for salad dressing on the side. Use sparingly if high in fat. Put your fork down between bites. It takes 20 minutes for your stomach to signal to your brain that it's full.

Q. What are some basics of healthy eating as part of a lifestyle?

A. Eat 5 -9 servings of fruits and vegetables. Use whole grains instead of refined (white) bread, rice, cereal or pasta. Cut back on sweetened drinks and soda. A 12 oz. can of soda contains 10 tsp. of sugar or high fructose corn syrup - empty calories that do not satisfy hunger. Limit fats to less than 20% of daily intake. Avoid saturated or trans fats and replace with plant based oils -olive, canola and peanut. Use low fat dairy products.



Q. Why is it important to eat colorful fruits and vegetables?

A. Colorful fruits and vegetables provide the wide range of vitamins, minerals, fiber and phytochemicals your body uses to maintain good health and energy levels, protect against the effects of aging, and reduce the risk of cancer and heart disease. Many of the phytochemicals and other compounds that make fruits and vegetables good for us also give them their color. That's why it's essential to sample the complete color spectrum every day to get the full preventive benefits of fruits and vegetables. For more information about what benefits the colors of fruits and vegetables offer, please turn to page 2.



Q. What role does fruits and vegetables actually play in good health?

A. Together, cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure, type 2 diabetes, and stroke account for more than 75% of all deaths in the U.S. The latest scientific evidence provides even greater support for the roles fruits and vegetables play in helping to protect against all of these diseases. Please turn to pages 3-4 for the complete article.

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WHAT IS A SERVING? A SERVING IS:

1 piece of medium fruit (apple, orange, pear)
½ cup chopped, cooked or canned fruit or ¾ cup of fruit juice

1 cup is the size of a baseball, ½ is the size of a baseball cut in half.

1 cup of raw leafy vegetables
½ cup of chopped, cooked or raw vegetables
¾ cup of vegetable juice or 1 medium potato
(which should be the size of a computer mouse)

1 slice of bread
½ of a hamburger roll or bagel
1 English muffin or pita
½ cup of cooked rice or pasta
1 cup of ready-to-eat cereal
1 oz. of snack food is a large handful

2-3 oz. of cooked lean meat, poultry or fish
1 oz of lean meat equals ½ cup of cooked dry beans, ½ cup of tofu, 2 tablespoons of peanut butter, 1 egg or 1/3 cup of nuts.

A serving of meat should be the size of a deck of cards.



FRUITS AND VEGETABLES ARE BETTER THAN PILLS



Only fruits and vegetables, not pills or supplements, can give you phytochemicals and nutrients in the healthy combinations nature intended. The 2005 Dietary Guidelines Advisory Report states that, “Many people understand the importance of good nutrition but believe that a daily vitamin pill will substitute for actually eating the foods that they know are good for them. However, the more scientists learn about nutrition and the human body, the more they realize the importance of eating whole foods. It is possible that nutrients are most beneficial to health when they are consumed in their natural form and in combination with each other, which occurs when a person consumes foods such as fruits, vegetables (includes legumes), and whole grains”.



THE COLORS OF HEALTH

Blue/purple fruits and vegetables contain varying amounts of health promoting phytochemicals for their possible antioxidant anti-aging benefits. Blue/purple in your low fat diet can help maintain a lower risk of some cancers, promote urinary tract health, memory function and healthy aging.

Green vegetables and fruits contain varying amounts of phytochemicals can help maintain a lower risk of some cancers, promote vision health and promote strong bones and teeth.

White, tan and brown fruits and vegetables can promote heart health, maintain cholesterol levels and lower the risk of some cancers.

Yellow/orange fruits and vegetables can help maintain a healthy heart, promote vision health, maintain a healthy immune system and can lower the risk of some cancers.

Red fruits and vegetables can help maintain a healthy heart, maintain memory function, lower the risk of some cancers and promote urinary tract health.

For optimum health, scientists say, eat a rainbow of colors. Your plate should look like a box of Crayolas. The rainbow of colors looks appetizing and will promote a healthier diet.

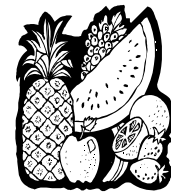
Because colorful fruits and vegetables contain hundreds of different phytochemicals, no one color group does it all. By eating regularly from each color group, you’re giving yourself the widest health protection possible. Phytochemicals work together naturally in ways that supplements simply can’t duplicate. For healthy results, whole foods are best.

“By eating fruits and vegetables from each color group, you will benefit from the unique array of phytochemicals, as well as essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber that each color group has to offer.”

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES: CHRONIC DISEASE FIGHTERS

Adults who increase their fruit and vegetable consumption to meet recommended nutrient intakes will also be consuming amounts of fruits and vegetables that are associated with a decreased risk of chronic diseases such as stroke, perhaps other cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, and cancer in certain sites.

Fruits and vegetables are linked to a reduction in cardiovascular disease in a variety of ways:



- ◆ They provide nutrients that may directly reduce cardiovascular risk.
- ◆ Certain nutrients may directly improve some established, diet-related cardiovascular disease factors
- ◆ The consumption of fruits and vegetables may lead to a reduced intake of saturated fat and cholesterol.

Type 2 Diabetes:

◆ The role of fruits and vegetables in prevention of type 2 diabetes tends to be associated with the fiber found in fruits and vegetables. Dietary fiber helps slow the release of sugar into the bloodstream, helping keep blood sugar levels normal.

Certain cancers:

- ◆ Greater consumption of fruits and vegetables is linked to a reduced risk of certain cancers (oral, pharynx, larynx, lung, esophagus, stomach, colon, and rectum).
- ◆ Phytochemicals in fruits and vegetables possess anti-cancer properties
- ◆ Fruits and vegetables provide fiber, which helps move food and carcinogens through the intestines faster, reducing the amount of time they have to damage cells and contribute to cancer.

Bring down high blood pressure with potassium-rich fruits and vegetables:

◆ Diets rich in potassium can lower blood pressure and help blunt the effects on blood pressure. Health authorities recommend increasing intake of fruits and vegetables rich in potassium to lower high blood pressure or keep blood pressure within normal range. By increasing potassium intake, many Americans could avoid high blood pressure altogether or lower high blood pressure if they already have it. Great sources of potassium are spinach, cantaloupe, Brussels sprouts, mushrooms, bananas, oranges, grapefruit, and potatoes.

Fiber fights heart disease and Type 2 Diabetes:

Most adult Americans need about 30 grams of fiber a day to meet the anticipated new recommendations.

How does Fiber work?

- ◆ Fiber slows down the absorption of food in the gut resulting in better blood sugar control, which may help prevent diminished blood sugar control and type 2 diabetes later on.
- ◆ Fiber lowers blood triglyceride levels. High triglycerides can damage arteries and increase risk for heart disease.
- ◆ Fiber rich fruits and vegetables are rich in potassium, which helps lower blood pressure, one of the biggest risk factors for heart disease.
- ◆ Fiber-rich fruits, vegetables and whole grains are rich in phytochemicals that may have heart-disease fighting properties.





TOO MANY CALORIES, TOO FEW NUTRIENTS: ACHIEVING BALANCE



WITH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



Although Americans consume more than enough calories, most Americans do not consume enough vitamins A & C, potassium, magnesium and fiber. Fruits and vegetables are naturally low in calories and are rich in vitamins A & C, potassium, magnesium, and fiber. Eating more fruits and vegetables can help prevent weight gain, help with weight loss, and provide many nutrients Americans don't get enough of.

How eating more fruits and vegetables helps control weight



Fruits and vegetables can help you feel full on fewer calories than if you ate the same of many other foods. That's because fruits and vegetables are high in water and fiber content and therefore low in calories relative to their volume.

Studies show that a low-fat diet that allows unlimited consumption of fruits and vegetables can lead to sustained weight loss. How? Controlling hunger is critical to success when trying to lose weight. Because fruits and vegetables are high in fiber and water, they can help give you a satisfying amount of food that's still low in calories.

Studies show that when people simply start eating more fruits and vegetables, they spontaneously eat fewer calories. That's because people tend to eat similar amounts of food even when the calories of food vary. When people eat more low calorie foods, such as fruits and vegetables, they naturally eat fewer high-calorie foods.

Focusing on a positive message like "eat more fruits and vegetables" without emphasizing what you can't eat, allows people to lower their calorie intake naturally without having to count calories.

Vitamin C: In addition to being a powerful dietary antioxidant that protects cells from damage, vitamin C also strengthens blood vessels, maintains healthy gums, and helps absorb iron.

Orange juice isn't the only great source of vitamin C. One third cup of sliced red bell pepper has the same amount of vitamin C as one cup of orange juice.

Other great sources of vitamin C include papayas, green peppers, strawberries, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, grapefruit, peas, kiwi, sweet potatoes, cantaloupe, mangoes, cauliflower, pineapple, dark leafy greens, cabbage, asparagus, honeydew melon, okra, watermelon, tangerines, winter squash, and summer squash.

Vitamin A: Vitamin A is important for vision, gene expression, healthy cells, growth, immune function, and maintenance of health bones, teeth and hair.

Great sources of vitamin A include carrots, pumpkin, sweet potatoes, dark leafy greens like spinach, winter squash, red bell peppers, Chinese cabbage, and cantaloupe.

Magnesium: Magnesium is important for the development and maintenance of bones and activating the enzymes necessary for energy release.

Great sources of magnesium include cooked spinach, soybeans, white beans, black beans, lima beans, beet greens, navy beans, black-eyed peas, great northern beans, pinto beans and kidney beans.

Fiber: Fiber helps maintain a healthy digestive tract and helps lower cholesterol. Good sources of fiber include beans like navy beans, kidney beans, split peas, raspberries, pears, green peas, blackberries, Brussels sprouts, sweet potatoes, dark leafy greens and blueberries.

A New Year's resolution of making fruits and vegetables a main part of your diet can give you many of the ingredients needed for good health.