

Fruits and vegetables: Eat 5 or more servings for health

Why?

Fruits and vegetables provide vitamins, minerals and fiber. A diet high in fruits and vegetables can help kids grow and fight illness. It also protects against heart disease, stroke, high blood pressure, and possibly, some cancers. The fiber and water in fruits and vegetables help you to feel full and to avoid overeating.



How to boost fruits and vegetables in your family's diet

As a parent, **YOU** have the most control over what your children eat—or at least what foods they can choose from. You play an important role for modeling healthy eating habits, buying and preparing healthy foods, and scheduling meals and snacks. Try these simple ways to help your kids learn to enjoy fruits and vegetables.

TIPS FOR SUCCESS

- Introduce vegetables and fruits **early** (during infancy and toddler years) and continue serving them **often**. Repetition is the key, so don't give up!
- **Be prepared**. Always keep a supply of cut up fruits and vegetables in the refrigerator for snacking. Store them in clear containers at eye level.
- Serve a vegetable or fruit at **every** meal and snack time, including foods sent to school.
- **Add extra** veggies to foods that you make from scratch or to prepared foods.
- **Don't overdo the juice**. Serving 100% juice is a healthy choice, but it doesn't substitute for whole fruit. Limit juice to 12 ounces a day for kids over age 6, and serve only 4-6 ounces a day for kids ages 6 and under.
- Serve fruit for snacks and dessert—try blending frozen fruit into shakes.

For more information:

Check out www.hsph.harvard.edu/nutritionsource/fruits.html or www.5aday.com