

Fact Sheet for **Parents** **GROWING UP HEALTHY**



5 or more fruits and vegetables • **2 hours or less of screen time** • **1 hour of physical activity** • **Almost no sugary beverages**



Did you know that...

Citrus fruits are the most widely grown crops in the entire world? Strawberries are grown in every state in the U.S. and every province in Canada? A serving of fruit is $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped fruit, $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dry fruit, one medium fruit, or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fruit juice? Or that a serving of vegetables is one cup leafy greens, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup chopped raw or cooked vegetables, or $\frac{1}{2}$ cup vegetable juice?

Strive to make sure your child eats at least **FIVE** or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day!

Fruits and vegetables are essential for a growing child's daily diet. Naturally low in calories and fat, they're a healthy choice anytime. Fruits and vegetables are also full of water and fiber—so they help us achieve and maintain a healthy weight because they fill us up and regulate digestion.

What's more, the phytochemicals (fight-o-chemicals), vitamins, and minerals in fruits and vegetables work together with fiber to benefit your health in many ways. Phytochemicals are what give fruits and vegetables their colors—that's why it's important to eat a variety of colorful produce every day.

See how colorful you can make your dinner table!

Try some fruits and vegetables like these:



Red peppers, red onions, beets, red cabbage, kidney beans, apples, pink grapefruit, red grapes, strawberries, cherries, watermelon, raspberries, cranberries, pomegranates, tomatoes, spaghetti sauce, tomato juice, and tomato soup



Carrots, summer squash, corn, sweet potatoes, butternut squash, pumpkin, yellow peppers, rutabagas, cantaloupe, grapefruit, lemons, nectarines, oranges, peaches, pineapples, tangerines, apricots, mangoes, and papayas



Leafy greens, asparagus, green peppers, broccoli, green beans, peas, cabbage, green onion, brussels sprouts, okra, zucchini, green apples, green grapes, honeydew melon, kiwifruit, and limes



Eggplant, purple grapes, plums, raisins, blueberries, blackberries, purple figs, dried plums, and black currants



Cauliflower, mushrooms, white beans, onions, garlic, parsnips, shallots, turnips, ginger, jicama, bananas, and pears



Are canned or frozen fruits and vegetables as healthy as fresh ones?

Yes! Most frozen, canned, and dried fruits or vegetables can be as nutritious as fresh produce. In some cases, when produce is frozen immediately after it's harvested, it can have more nutrients than fresh. So don't worry about your kids snacking on a small amount of dried fruit or heating up frozen veggies for dinner. They are all good choices and count towards the recommended five servings a day. When you do choose frozen, canned, or dried products, though, try to choose those without added sugars, sauces, or seasonings.

Help your kids get their fruits and vegetables even when you're on the run.

If you make the right choices, you can even get fruits and vegetables at a fast food restaurant! Instead of burgers and fries, try salads with grilled chicken, low-fat fruit and yogurt parfait, or apple-dippers with low-fat caramel dip.

Tips for filling your family's diet with fruits and vegetables

- 🍏 Get your kids involved by letting them pick out vegetables they like to eat at the grocery store. Ask them to find a new one for your family to try every week.
- 🍏 Add vegetables to foods you already make, like scrambled eggs or omelets, pizza, sandwiches, lasagna, pasta dishes or pasta sauce, and casseroles. Finely chopped vegetables are hard for kids to pick out.
- 🍏 Have fruits and vegetables in children's sight on the counter or in the fridge.
- 🍏 Chop up vegetables so they're easy to grab and ready to eat. In fact, get your kids involved in washing, chopping, and cooking fruits and vegetables. They love to eat what they help fix, and once they learn how to do it, there's less work for you!
- 🍏 Serve fruits and vegetables raw; kids often like crunchy textures.
- 🍏 Offer new fruits and vegetables and old favorites together. It can take more than 10 tries for a child to like a new food, so if they don't like it the first time, try it again next week!
- 🍏 Offer peanut butter, low-fat dips and dressings, or low-fat cheese along with fruits and veggies.
- 🍏 Add berries, bananas, or other brightly colored fruits to cereal, pancakes, waffles, oatmeal, or toast.
- 🍏 Jazz up salads with color and flavor by adding chopped apples, raisins, or mandarin oranges.
- 🍏 Make sure there are fruit or vegetable options at every meal.
- 🍏 Be a good role model! Show your kids how much you enjoy fruits and vegetables!