Smart Food Choices: Flavorful Fruits

Make half your plate fruits and vegetables.

Fact Sheet FS1052







Cooperative Extension

FAMILY AND COMMUNITY HEALTH SCIENCES

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Any fruit or 100% fruit juice counts as part of the fruit group. Fruits may be fresh, canned, frozen, or dried, and may be whole, cut-up, or pureed. The amount of fruit you need to eat depends on age, sex, and level of physical activity.

Daily Recommendation		
Children	2-3 years old	1 cup
	4-8 years old	1 to 1 ½ cups
Girls	9-13 years old	1 ½ cups
	14-18 years old	1 ½ cups
Boys	9-13 years old	1 ½ cups
	14-18 years old	2 cups
Women	19-30 years old	2 cups
	31-50 years old	1 ½ cups
	51+ years old	1 ½ cups
Men	19-30 years old	2 cups
	31-50 years old	2 cups
	51+ years old	2 cups

These amounts are appropriate for individuals who get less than 30 minutes per day of moderate physical activity, beyond normal daily activities. Those who are more physically active may be able to consume more while staying within calorie needs

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In general, 1 cup of fruit or 100% fruit juice, or ½ cup of dried fruit can be considered as 1 cup from the fruit group. The following amounts count as 1 cup of fruit (in some cases equivalents for ½ cup are also shown) towards your daily recommended intake:

Amount that counts as 1 cup of fruit	
Apple	½ large (3.25" diameter)
	1 small (2.5" diameter)
	1 cup sliced or chopped, raw or cooked
Applesauce	1 cup
Banana	1 cup sliced
	1 large (8″ to 9″ long)
Canteloupe	1 cup diced or melon balls
Grapes	1 cup whole or cut-up
	32 seedless grapes
Grapefruit	1 medium (4″ diameter)
	1 cup sections
Mixed fruit (fruit cocktail)	1 cup diced or sliced, raw or canned, drained
Orange	1 large (3-1/16" diameter)
	1 cup sections
Orange, mandarin	1 cup canned, drained
Peach	1 large (2 ¾″ diameter)
	1 cup sliced or diced, raw, cooked, or canned, drained
	2 halves, canned
Pear	1 medium pear (2.5 per lb)
	1 cup sliced or diced, raw, cooked, or canned, drained
Plum	1 cup sliced raw or cooked
	3 medium or 2 large plums
Strawberries	About 8 large berries
	1 cup whole, halved, or sliced, fresh or frozen
Watermelon	1 small wedge (1″ thick)
	1 cup diced or balls
Dried fruit (raisins, prunes, apricots, etc.)	½ cup dried fruit is equivalent to 1 cup fruit ½ cup raisins ½ cup prunes ½ cup dried apricots
100% fruit juice (orange, apple, grape, grapefruit, etc.)	1 cup

Nutritional Benefits of Fruits

- Most fruits are low in fat, sodium, and calories. None have cholesterol.
- Fruits are good sources of potassium, dietary fiber, vitamin C. High in potassium are: bananas, prunes and prune juice, dried peaches and apricots, cantaloupe, honeydew melon, and orange juice.
- Provides fiber for proper bowel function. It helps reduce constipation and diverticulosis.
- Provides a feeling of fullness with fewer calories. Whole or cut-up fruits are sources of dietary fiber; fruit juices contain little or no fiber.
- Provides Vitamin C for growth and repair of all body tissues and helps heal cuts and wounds, along with keeping teeth and gums healthy.
- Provides folate (folic acid) to form red blood cells. Women of childbearing age who may become pregnant and those in the first trimester of pregnancy should consume adequate folate.
- Reduce risk for stroke, Type 2 diabetes and perhaps other cardiovascular diseases.
- Protect against certain cancers, such as mouth, stomach, and colon-rectum cancer.
- Reduce the risk of developing kidney stones and may help to decrease bone loss.

Lunchbox Ideas with Fruit

Unless your family's lunch will be kept in a refrigerator at school or work, make sure you have a cool pack in the lunchbox to keep foods fresh. Proteins, dressings and dairy, especially, must be kept cold to keep them from spoiling

Proteins: Use a variety of lean meats, such as sliced turkey with cranberry sauce or chicken breast. Other good sources of protein are peanut butter, (good with banana) low-fat cheese, hummus, or hard-boiled eggs.

Dressing: Try mustard, light mayonnaise or low-fat salad dressing as a spread. If your family likes butter, try tub margarine. Salsa also makes a great dressing. Try mango peach salsa for a change.

Fruit: Use any fresh fruit in season, applesauce, fruit cocktail cups (packed in fruit juice not sugar syrup), or 100% fruit juice boxes. Keep lunch interesting by choosing different fruits on occasion --for example, star fruit, kiwi or papaya.

Vegetables: Use all the colors! Pack an assortment of carrot sticks, cherry tomatoes, green and red pepper strips, celery with peanut butter, broccoli or cauliflower florets with light dressing. You can mix up a medley of cooked vegetables and stuff them in pocket bread. If you add lettuce to a sandwich, remember to dry it well after washing it or you'll have a soggy sandwich.

Dairy products: Jazz up low-fat yogurt with fresh fruit or low-fat granola.

Grains: Use whole-wheat bread for sandwiches. If your family is tired of sandwich bread, try whole-wheat pocket or pita bread, tortilla wraps, rice cakes or grain salads, such as couscous and add apple, citrus or mango.

Keep Fruit Safe

- Wash hands OFTEN with hot soapy water for 20 seconds before, during and after preparation.
- Wash fruit with cool tap water before cutting, eating raw or cooking.
- Rub fruit briskly with your hands and a clean produce brush to remove dirt and surface residues. Dry after washing. Do not use soap or detergents to clean vegetables.
- Keep fruit separate from raw meat, poultry and seafood while shopping, preparing, or storing.
- Do not cross contaminate! Use a clean cutting board for fruit

Snack Ideas

Fresh fruit or dried fruit; whole-wheat pretzels, crackers or rice cakes; low-fat yogurt with fresh fruit; cottage cheese with applesauce; apple slices with almond butter; trail mix or granola; peanut butter and banana slices; pineapple or mango smoothies.

Beverages

Water or seltzer water, low-fat (1% or skim) milk for children over age two, whole or 2% milk for children under two, or offer them limited amounts of 100 % fruit juice. Eating fruit rather than drinking more than 8 oz of juice per day is recommended for older children, adolescents and adults to limit sugar and calories.

For More Info

http://njaes.rutgers.edu/fchs/ & http://www.getmovinggethealthynj.rutgers.edu/

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