



Fruits, Vegetables, and Fiber

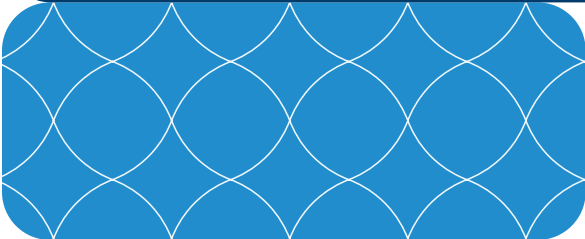
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Content for this guide was adapted from information provided by Healthwise by WebMD Ignite.



Fruits and Vegetables

Eating more fruits and vegetables is one of the best things you can do for your health. They give your body vitamins, minerals, and fiber.

They can help you feel full, have more energy, and lower your risk for some diseases.

Fruits and vegetables can also help with weight management because they are low in calories and high in fiber.

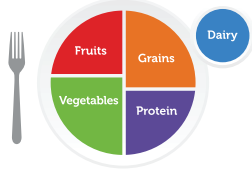
Adding More Fruits and Vegetables to Your Diet

These tips can help you get started with eating more fruits and vegetables:

- **Make it easy.**
 - Keep a bowl of fruit within easy reach at home and at work so that you can grab a piece of fruit when you're hungry.
 - Buy packaged, ready-to-eat fresh vegetables and fruits. These cut down on preparation time.
 - Use the microwave to quickly cook vegetables.
 - Keep fresh fruit on hand for a snack that is easy to take with you when you're away from home.
- **Be creative.**
 - Mix sliced fruit or frozen berries with high-protein yogurt or cereal.
 - Add apple chunks, pineapple, or grapes to tuna or chicken salad.
- Make fruit smoothies by blending together fresh fruit and high-protein yogurt or Fairlife® high-protein milk or protein drinks.
- Add fresh fruit to oatmeal, pancakes, and waffles.
- Add colorful vegetables, such as red cabbage, carrots, and bell peppers, to green salads.
- Top salads with fresh cranberries, sliced pears, oranges, nectarines, strawberries, or grapefruit.
- Add extra vegetables to pasta sauces and soups. Try grated zucchini or carrots, spinach, kale, and bell peppers.
- Add vegetables to sandwiches. Lettuce, tomatoes, cucumbers, bell peppers, and avocado slices are flavorful choices.
- **Pump up the flavor.**
 - Dip raw vegetables in low-fat salad dressing, hummus, or peanut butter.
 - Toss raw or cooked broccoli and cauliflower with low-fat Italian dressing and Parmesan cheese to make a flavorful side dish.
 - Roast vegetables and fruits to bring out their flavor. Just drizzle them with a small amount of olive oil, and bake until tender.
 - Season cooked vegetables with a squeeze of lemon and a small amount of olive oil. For extra flavor, add fresh herbs such as basil, tarragon, and sage.
 - Try baked apples or pears topped with cinnamon and honey for a delicious dessert.



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Focus on Whole Fruits

Healthy eating is important at every age. Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When deciding what fruits to eat, choose options that are full of nutrients and limited in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Start with these tips:



Include fruit at breakfast

Top cereal with your favorite seasonal or frozen fruit, add bananas or chopped apples to pancakes, or mix raisins into hot oatmeal.



Take fruit on the go

Fruits like oranges, bananas, and apples are great portable snacks. You can also bring along a can of mandarin oranges or pineapple chunks packed in water.



Make your own trail mix

Combine one or two favorite breakfast cereals with dried cranberries and raisins. Bring for a snack in a small sealable bag or container.



Enjoy fruit as a snack

Make fruit kabobs using melon chunks, bananas, and grapes. Top with a light yogurt sauce for a fruity snack or side dish.



Add fruit at dinner

Chop up a combination of tropical or seasonal fruits to make a fruit salsa to top fish or chicken, or add fruit like grapefruit sections, apple wedges, or grapes to a tossed salad.



Keep fruit on hand

Cut up fruit and place in a bowl in the refrigerator. Put the bowl at the front of the shelf so that it's the first thing you see when you open the door.

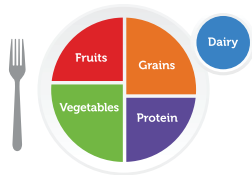


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**The benefits of healthy eating
add up over time, bite by bite.**

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Vary Your Vegetables

Healthy eating is important at every age. Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When deciding what vegetables to eat, choose options that are full of nutrients and limited in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Start with these tips:



Start your day with vegetables

Add leftover cooked vegetables to your omelet or breakfast wrap. Or, add spinach to a morning smoothie and enjoy a burst of flavor and nutrition!



Add variety to salads

Make your salad pop with color and flavor by including corn kernels, radish slices, or diced red onions. Include seasonal vegetables for variety throughout the year.



Try a stir-fry

Stir-fry vegetables like carrots, shredded cabbage, greens, and low-sodium jarred mushrooms for a quick meal. Add some tofu as a protein source.



Spruce up your sandwich

Add spinach or some thinly sliced sweet onions to your favorite sandwich or wrap for extra flavor and a little crunch.



Go for a dip or a dunk

Enjoy baked potato wedges, cucumber slices, or cauliflower pieces with a homemade Italian dressing or dunked into a low-fat dip or hummus.



Take vegetables on the go

Carry along some crunchy carrot, celery, or jicama sticks. A small container of cherry tomatoes or sugar snap peas also makes an easy snack.

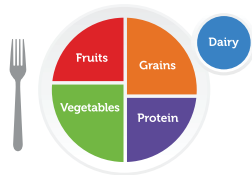


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Enjoy Vegetarian Meals

Healthy eating is important at every age. Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy or fortified soy alternatives. When deciding what to eat or drink, choose options that are full of nutrients and limited in added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium. Start with these tips:



Make simple changes

Create main dishes such as pasta primavera with vegetables and chickpeas, pizza topped with vegetables, veggie lasagna, tofu-vegetable stir-fry, and spicy bean burritos.



Think about plant-based protein

Eat a variety of plant protein foods such as black or kidney beans, cooked split peas, and yellow or green lentils. Nuts and seeds are also great options to help you meet protein needs.



Build strong bones with calcium

If you skip dairy, get calcium from fortified products like soy beverages, tofu, and some breakfast cereals and orange juices. Dark-green leafy vegetables like collard greens, spinach, and kale are sources of calcium, too.



Add nuts to your day

Choose unsalted nuts as a snack, or use them in salads or main dishes to bump up your protein, dietary fiber, and healthy fats. Slivered almonds or crushed walnuts are great on a green salad.



Have beans for lunch or dinner

Try a bean-based chili, three bean salad, or split pea soup. Because of their high nutrient content, beans, peas, and lentils, which are excellent sources of protein, fiber, folate, and several minerals, are recommended for everyone—vegetarians and nonvegetarians alike—because of their high nutrient content.



Enjoy a veggie snack

Snack on raw veggies and hummus—a Middle Eastern dip made from blended chickpeas (garbanzo beans). Hummus is rich in protein, dietary fiber, and several important minerals.



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Roasting Vegetables

Roasting vegetables means cooking them in an oven at a high temperature (usually around 400°) until they are soft.

Roasting brings out the natural flavors in vegetables. This makes them taste better and feel more satisfying to eat.

Roasting is an easy, low-fat way to cook that can help you enjoy more vegetables and stick to your weight goals.

| Vegetable | Amount | How to cut | Roasting time | Suggested seasoning |
|------------------|--------|---|------------------|--|
| Asparagus | 2 lb | Cut off about 1 to 2 inches of the bottoms of the stalks | 10 to 15 minutes | Sprinkle with lemon peel after roasting |
| Beets | 2 lb | No cutting – leave them whole and unpeeled | 1 hour | Peel them after roasting and chop them into pieces Sprinkle with salt, pepper, and orange peel after roasting |
| Broccoli | 2 lb | Cut off the tips of the stems Then cut them into 2-inch wide pieces (florets) | 10 to 15 minutes | Sprinkle with low-fat cheddar cheese after roasting |
| Brussels Sprouts | 2 lb | Cut the tough bottom part off of each sprout Remove any loose or damaged leaves Cut each sprout in half lengthwise through the middle | 10 to 15 minutes | Sprinkle with salt and pepper after roasting Eat them right away when their flavor is best |
| Butternut Squash | 2 lb | Cut into 2-inch pieces | 40 minutes | Toss with dried rosemary before roasting |
| Carrots | 2 lb | Cut into 1-inch pieces | 30 to 40 minutes | Toss with pumpkin pie spice after roasting |
| Cauliflower | 1½ lb | Cut off the tips of the stems Then cut into 2-inch wide pieces (florets) | 20 to 30 minutes | Sprinkle with chopped parsley after roasting |
| Eggplant | 2 lb | Cut into slices that are ½ an inch thick | 20 to 25 minutes | Drizzle with olive oil after roasting |

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| Vegetable | Amount | How to cut | Roasting time | Suggested seasoning |
|---------------|--------------------------|---|------------------|---|
| Fennel | 2 lb | <p>Cut off the tips of the stems</p> <p>Remove any wilted outer layers so you are left with just the white bulb</p> <p>Cut the bulb into 12 wedge-shaped pieces</p> | 35 to 40 minutes | Sprinkle with orange peel after roasting |
| Green Beans | 2 lb | Cut or snap off the ends | 20 to 30 minutes | Toss with a squeeze of lemon and chopped dill after roasting |
| Onions | 2 lb (2 jumbo onions) | <p>Peel the outer skin off</p> <p>Cut the bulb into 12 wedge-shaped pieces</p> | 20 to 30 minutes | <p>Remove the tray from the oven 5 minutes before they are done</p> <p>Then brush the onion pieces with vinegar and sprinkle them with brown sugar</p> <p>Put them back in the oven for 5 minutes</p> |
| Sweet Peppers | 2 lb | Cut into 1-inch wide strips | 30 minutes | Sprinkle with sliced basil after roasting |
| Turnips | 2 lb | <p>Peel the turnips</p> <p>Then cut them into 6 wedge-shaped pieces</p> | 45 to 50 minutes | Toss with chopped mint after roasting |
| Zucchini | 2 lb | <p>Cut off both ends</p> <p>Cut the zucchini in half across the middle so you have 2 shorter pieces</p> <p>Take each half and cut it into 4 long wedges</p> | 15 to 20 minutes | Sprinkle with parmesan cheese after roasting |

Roasting Tips

- When cutting vegetables, make sure they are all about the same size.
- Spread the vegetables out in a single layer on the baking sheet so they do not touch.
- Flip them halfway through the cooking time to get even browning.
- In most cases, season the vegetables after roasting for the best flavor.

Fiber

Fruits and vegetables are a great way to get more fiber. Fiber is also found in healthy foods like whole grains, beans, and nuts.

Eating a diet high in fiber is thought to help prevent constipation and its related problems. It may lower blood pressure, improve cholesterol levels, and help control blood sugar levels. And it may help you reach and stay at a healthy weight.

Recommended Amount of Fiber

In general, experts recommend that:

- Men ages 19 and older try to get 38 grams of fiber a day.
- Women ages 19 and older should try to get 25 grams a day.

If you have questions about how much fiber you need, talk with your doctor or a registered dietitian.

Eating More Fiber

Increase the amount of fiber in your diet slowly so that your stomach can adjust to the change. Adding too much fiber too quickly may cause stomach upset and gas.

If you need help changing your diet, talk to your doctor or a registered dietitian.

- Choose whole-grain breads and cereals.
 - Look for ones that have at least 4 grams of fiber in each serving.
 - Buy bread that lists whole wheat (or other whole grains), stone-ground wheat, or cracked wheat as the first ingredients.
- Eat brown rice, bulgur, or millet. Choose these instead of white rice.
- Eat several servings of fresh fruits and vegetables a day. Good choices include berries, apples, figs, oranges, pears, prunes, broccoli, brussels sprouts, carrots, corn, peas, and beans.
- Eat cooked dry beans and other legumes. Beans (navy, pinto, black, kidney, lima, white, great northern), split peas, lentils, and chickpeas are good sources of fiber.

- Check labels to find the amount of fiber in packaged foods and fiber supplements. For example, bran has a lot of fiber. But many bran products, such as muffins and waffles, contain very little bran. Check the labels for the actual fiber content.
- Drink plenty of water every day. High-fiber diets need lots of water to work properly. If your diet has enough fiber in it, your stools should become softer, larger, and easier to pass.

Some doctors recommend adding bran to your diet to help boost your fiber intake. If you do this, start slowly with 1 teaspoon a day. Gradually increase the amount to several teaspoons a day.

Fiber Content of Foods

Fiber is found only in plant foods like fruit, vegetables, legumes, whole grains, nuts, and seeds. Dietary fibers are key nutrients that offer clear benefits for health and wellbeing. Eating a variety of plant foods will provide you with a range of different fibers, which will work together to support your gut and overall health.

The best approach to eating more fiber (if recommended) is to gradually increase foods high in fiber and drink plenty of fluids.

- A moderate-fiber or low-fiber food can become a high-fiber food if you eat a large amount.
- A high-fiber food can become a low-fiber food if you only eat a small amount.
- The Nutrition Facts label on food products lists the amount of fiber in grams (g) per serving.

Measurement Units and Abbreviations

cupsc
ounces oz
tablespoontbsp
teaspoon tsp

Foods High in Fiber (4 grams or more)

| Food Group | Food | Serving |
|---------------|--|-----------------|
| Grains | Cereal, Bran | ½ c |
| | Cereal, Shredded Wheat | 1 c |
| | Oatmeal | 1 c |
| | Popcorn | 1 c |
| | Quinoa | ½ cup |
| | Wheat Bran | 3 tbsp |
| Protein Foods | Beans, Canned (such as garbanzo or kidney) | ½ c |
| | Flaxseed, Ground | 2 tbsp |
| | Lentils | ½ c |
| | Peas | ½ c |
| | Soybeans | ½ c |
| Vegetables | Potato, with Skin | 1 medium potato |
| | Mixed Vegetables, Frozen | ½ c |
| Fruit | Blackberries or Raspberries | ½ c |
| | Coconut | 1 oz |
| | Pear | 1 medium pear |

Foods Moderate in Fiber (1 to 3 grams)

| Food Group | Food | Serving |
|---------------|--|---------------------|
| Grains | Bread: Whole Wheat, Cracked Wheat, Pumpnickel, or Rye | 1 slice |
| | Bun, Hot Dog or Hamburger | 1 bun |
| | Crackers, Whole Grain | 4 crackers |
| | English Muffin | 1 muffin (2 halves) |
| | Pasta: Chickpea, Lentil, or Whole Grain | ½ c |
| | Rice: Brown or Wild | ½ c |
| | Wheat Germ | 2 tbsp |
| | Whole grains: Barley, Bulgur, Farro, Freekeh, Millet, or Spelt | ½ c |
| Protein Foods | Nuts, All Types | ¼ c |
| | Nut Butters: Almond, Cashew, Peanut | 2 tbsp |
| | Seeds: Pumpkin or Sesame | 2 tbsp |
| | Veggie Burger | 1 burger patty |

Foods Moderate in Fiber (1 to 3 grams) ... continued

| Food Group | Food | Serving |
|------------|---|-----------------|
| Vegetables | Beets | ½ c |
| | Broccoli | ½ c |
| | Brussels Sprouts | ½ c |
| | Cabbage | ½ c |
| | Carrots | ½ c |
| | Cauliflower | ½ c |
| | Corn | ½ c |
| | Eggplant | ½ c |
| | Greens: Beet, Collard, Kale, or Turnip | ½ c |
| | Green Beans | ½ c |
| | Okra | ½ c |
| | Spinach | ½ c |
| | Squash | ½ c |
| | Tomato Sauce | ½ c |
| | Tomato | 1 medium tomato |
| Fruit | Apple, with Skin | 1 medium apple |
| | Applesauce | ½ c |
| | Avocado | ½ c |
| | Banana | 1 medium banana |
| | Blueberries, Cranberries, or Strawberries | ½ c |
| | Cherries | 10 cherries |
| | Dates | 4 small dates |
| | Fruit, Canned | ½ c |
| | Grapefruit | ½ grapefruit |
| | Kiwi | 1 kiwi |
| | Orange | 1 medium orange |
| | Papaya | ½ papaya |
| | Peach | 1 medium peach |
| | Pineapple | ½ c |
| | Plum | 1 plum |
| | Prunes | 4 prunes |
| Tangerine | 1 medium tangerine | |

Foods Low in Fiber (less than 1 gram)

| Food Group | Food | Serving |
|------------------------------|---|-------------|
| Grains | Bread, White | 1 slice |
| | Rice, White | ½ c |
| | Pasta, White | ½ c |
| Protein Foods | Egg, Whole | 1 large egg |
| | Meats: Beef, Fish, Lamb, Pork, or Poultry | 3 oz |
| Dairy and Dairy Alternatives | Cheese, All Types | 1 oz |
| | Milk, All Types | 1 c |
| | Soymilk | 1 c |

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