

# Colour your Choices with Vegetables and Fruit



**Bright red and yellow peppers, juicy oranges, sweet pineapples, plump berries and grapes, crisp carrots, ripe tomatoes and luscious leafy greens – doesn't your mouth water just thinking about these delicious foods?**

Vegetables and Fruit are one of four important food groups in Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide.

Together with Grain Products, Milk and Alternatives, and Meat and Alternatives, they form an ideal blueprint for healthy eating.

Vegetables and Fruit taste awesome!

Your taste buds will come alive when you savour the sweetness of snow peas, the crunch of cucumber and the kick of kiwi!

Vegetables and Fruit help you stay healthy.

They are loaded with vitamins, minerals and fibre all known to help fight disease and allow your body to perform at its best.

- With the exception of avocados, vegetables and fruit are low in fat and calories. They make a great snack any time of the day.

- Broccoli, red, yellow and green peppers, red cabbage, strawberries, oranges, grapefruit and kiwi are best picks for Vitamin C, which is needed to help prevent infections and heal cuts.

- Fruits, such as apples, strawberries and citrus fruits contain soluble fibre, which helps to reduce 'bad' cholesterol. Most fruits and vegetables, except for juices, also provide insoluble fibre, which helps to keep digestive systems healthy and regular.

- Dark green leafy vegetables, asparagus, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, green peas, avocado, oranges and orange juice are great sources of folate. This B vitamin is needed for healthy red blood cells and is known to protect against neural tube defects during pregnancy. Enjoy a dark green or orange vegetable or fruit every day.

- Lower your risk for heart disease, stroke and certain types of cancer by choosing antioxidant rich vegetables and fruit.

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## Tips for choosing and enjoying Vegetables and Fruit

Enjoy vegetables and fruit at each meal or snack to get the amount you need each day.

Canada's Food Guide recommends a certain number of Food Guide Servings each day from the Vegetables and Fruit group depending on your age and sex.

Age	# of Food Guide Servings of Vegetables and Fruit
Toddlers 2-3 years	4
Children 4-8 years	5
Youth 9-13 years	6
Teens (females) 14-18 years	7
Teens (males) 14-18 years	8
Adults (females) 19-50 years	7-8
Adults (males) 19-50 years	8-10
Adults (females) 51 years and older	7
Adults (males) 51 years and older	7

One Food Guide Serving is equal to

- 1 medium piece of fresh fruit
- 125 mL (1/2 cup) of cut up fresh, frozen or canned fruit or vegetable
- 250 mL (1 cup) of green salad
- 125 mL (1/2 cup) of 100% fruit juice
- 60 mL (1/4 cup) dried fruit

### Choose vegetables and fruit more often than juice.

You'll get more fibre and other important nutrients. When choosing juice, look for products that are 100% juice with no added sugar.

### Make your plate a healthy one!

Fill it half with vegetables and fruit.

### Vegetables and Fruit are totally versatile!

Enjoy them fresh, frozen, canned or dried. Try them in soups, stir-fries, stews, casseroles or as a dessert.

### Short on time?

Use frozen fruits or veggies, pre-washed bagged salads or pre-cut vegetables and fruit to save time.

### In a hurry?

Grab the perfect fast food that doesn't need a container – bananas, apples, pears, and oranges are all easy take along foods.

### Need a yummy breakfast?

Blend 1 cup (250 mL) yogurt with 1 banana, 1/2 cup (125 mL) orange juice and a few berries for a tasty shake.

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### Hold the fat, sugar and salt.

Enjoy the true taste of vegetables and fruit. Enhance flavours with herbs and spices rather than salt. Avoid deep fried vegetables – have steamed or stir-fried vegetables instead. Choose unsweetened or fruit packed in juice.

### Lock in nutrients.

Steam or use just a small amount of cooking water and cook until tender-crisp to keep the most nutrients in your veggies.

### Show children how and where veggies are grown

– try growing a few in your own back yard or take a road trip to a pick-your-own field, orchard, or farmers market.

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