

Words on Wellness

Your extension connection to nutrition and fitness

March Is National Nutrition Month: Eat Right with Color

Every March the American Dietetic Association observes National Nutrition Month®. This year the theme is 'Eat Right with Color.' Research suggests people who eat generous amounts of different colored fruits and vegetables as part of a healthy diet are likely to reduce their risks of chronic diseases including strokes, type 2 diabetes, and some types of cancer. The 2005 Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends that a person needing 2,000 calories a day eat 2½ cups of vegetables and 2 cups of fruit per day. To meet that goal, most people need to eat more fruits and vegetables. All forms of fruits and vegetables count: fresh, frozen, canned, dried, and 100% fruit juice. Whole fruit, however, contains more fiber than juice so it's best to limit juice to 1 cup or less per day. To get the variety that different colored vegetables provide, the following amounts from the vegetable subgroups (based on 2,000 calories) is recommended:

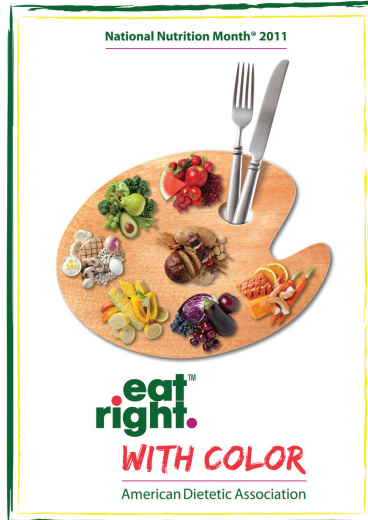
Dark green vegetables	3 cups per week
Orange vegetables	2 cups per week
Dried beans and peas	3 cups per week
Starchy vegetables	3 cups per week
Other vegetables	6½ cups per week

To find out how many cups of fruits and vegetables you should be eating, visit www.mypyramid.gov.

Just 'Tri' It

Training for a triathlon is one way to add variety to your workout routine. A triathlon consists of swimming, biking, and running. You don't have to be a star athlete; triathlons come in all shapes and sizes, from the sprint-distance triathlon to the Ironman distance. If you're motivated and do the training, you can cross the finish line. There are many small, local sprint-distance triathlons that are great for your first experience. Contact a local sporting goods store or running club to see if they have a list of races in your area. If you don't want to complete the entire race, organize a relay. For more information about triathlons, visit www.beginnertriathlete.com.

For more information about sports nutrition, visit ISU Extension's Eat to Compete Sports Nutrition website at <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/nutrition/sport/>.



Broccoli Vegetable Medley

Makes 4 servings

Sauce:

- ¼ cup canned or homemade vegetable or chicken broth
- 1 tablespoon soy sauce
- 2 tablespoons water
- Pepper to taste

Vegetables:

- 1 teaspoon cooking oil
- 1 medium carrot, thinly sliced diagonally
- 1 red bell pepper, seeded and cut into bite sized pieces
- ½ onion, cut into 1 inch pieces
- 2 cups broccoli florets

Instructions:

1. Combine sauce ingredients in a bowl, set aside.
2. Place a wok or wide frying pan over HIGH heat until hot.
3. Add oil, swirling to coat sides.
4. Add vegetables and stir-fry for 1 minute.
5. Add sauce and bring to a boil.
6. Reduce heat to MEDIUM-HIGH; cover and cook for 5 minutes.

Nutrition Information: 42 calories, 1.4 grams total fat, 7 grams carbohydrate, 2 grams protein, 2 grams fiber, 306 mg sodium, 0 mg cholesterol
Adapted from Fruits and Veggies More Matters website. For more recipes and access to the recipe's full nutritional profile, visit www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org.



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Fresh Vegetable Guide

Use the Extension publication “Fresh Vegetable Guide” (PM 2034) to find out what to look for when purchasing fresh vegetables, the proper way to store them to maintain freshness, and what’s in season. This publication is available to download from <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/Publications/PM2034.pdf>

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Phytochemicals – They’re Good for You

In addition to vitamins and minerals, fruits and vegetables contain phytochemicals, which are compounds providing color, aroma, texture and flavor to plant-based foods. Phytochemicals help reduce the risk of many diseases. More than 2,000 phytochemicals are plant pigments, which provide a rainbow of fruits and vegetables. Just remember, the darker the color, the more phytochemicals and health benefits of a fruit or vegetable. For example, spinach will have more phytochemicals and health benefits than iceberg lettuce.

Color	Phytochemical	Health Benefit	Examples
Red	Lycopene	May reduce the risk of prostate cancer	Tomatoes, watermelon, pink grapefruit, berries, cherries, red apples, beets, red cabbage
Orange/yellow	Beta Carotene	Reduces risk for heart disease; boosts immune system; helps maintain good eyesight	Apricots, pumpkin, mangos, sweet potatoes, oranges
Blue/purple	Anthocyanins	May help reduce risk of heart disease and gastrointestinal track cancer; anti-inflammatory properties	Blueberries, eggplant, plums, raisins, purple grapes
White	Allicin	May help lower cholesterol and blood pressure, reducing risk of heart disease; may reduce risk of stomach cancer	Garlic, onions, leeks
	Sulphoraphane	Possible role in inhibiting cancer growth	Cauliflower, jicama, parsnips, banana
Green	Lutein	May help reduce risk for cataracts and age-related macular degeneration	Spinach, kale, peas, Brussels sprouts, kiwifruit, cabbage, bok choy, broccoli, green grapes

Washing Fresh Produce

To prevent foodborne illness, you need to wash fresh produce whether it’s from the grocery store, farmers’ market, or your garden. Most produce does not need to be washed until it is ready to prepare or eat. Start by washing your hands with soap and water. The best way to remove dirt and germs is to wash produce thoroughly with running, drinkable water. When washing heads of lettuce or cabbage, you need to loosen dirt. Remove and discard the outer leaves before rubbing gently under cool, running water. Bagged greens that have been washed before packaging do not need to be rewashed. Fruits and vegetables that have firm surfaces, such as melons or potatoes, should be scrubbed with a clean brush. Wash all produce even if you aren’t going to eat the skins. Dirt on the surface can pass to the edible parts. Do not use soap, vinegar, baking soda, chlorine bleach, or special washes to clean fruit or vegetables.



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...and justice for all

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For more information on safe handling of raw produce, visit <http://www.fda.gov/downloads/Food/ResourcesForYou/Consumers/UCM174142.pdf>