

HOW MANY FRUITS & VEGGIES DO YOU NEED TO EAT?

The Dietary Guidelines for Americans (DGA), recommend 2 cups per day of fruits and 3 cups per day of vegetables based on a 2,000-calorie diet.

Your specific recommendation depends on your age, sex, height, weight, and physical activity. It can also depend on whether you are pregnant or breastfeeding.

Here's a way to make it easy:

Every time you eat, Have A Plant®!



WHAT COUNTS AS A SERVING?

Any fruit or vegetable counts as a serving. Fruits or vegetables may be fresh, frozen, canned, or dried/dehydrated.

Portions of 100% juice should be limited or diluted. Vegetables and fruits in their whole form provide much-needed dietary fiber.

WHAT DOES A CUP OF FRUITS & VEGGIES LOOK LIKE?

Here are some examples:



12 Baby Carrots



1 Large Banana



1 Large Ear of Corn



8 Large Strawberries



1 Medium Grapefruit



1 Medium Potato

MORE RESOURCES AVAILABLE TO YOU

Have A Plant® Fruit & Veggie Inspiration:
fruitsandveggies.org

American Heart Association: heart.org

Academy of Nutrition & Dietetics: eatright.org

For recipe inspiration,
visit fruitsandveggies.org.

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MANAGING HEART DISEASE

Every Time You Eat, Have A Plant®

Heart disease, also known as cardiovascular disease (CVD), refers to several conditions that affect the heart and blood vessels. These include high blood pressure, heart attack, heart valve problems, heart failure, and stroke. Treatment includes healthy eating, exercise, and possibly surgeries or medications. Fruits and vegetables play a key role in a heart-healthy diet and help prevent and manage heart disease.

Here's why:

- They're rich in fiber and potassium, which help support healthy blood pressure, keep cholesterol in check, and help your heart work better day to day.
- They're packed with vitamins, minerals and "nutrient-like" compounds called antioxidants and phytochemicals that help reduce inflammation and protect blood vessels – key for keeping your heart healthy over time.



HOW FOOD CHOICES AFFECT YOUR HEART

Over time, daily food choices can either support or strain the heart and blood vessels. Fruits and vegetables are rich in potassium, fiber, and antioxidants making them an important part of heart health.

Blood pressure.

Potassium and fiber help support healthy blood pressure by balancing sodium intake and supporting proper blood vessel function.

Cholesterol levels.

Fiber can help lower LDL cholesterol, reducing the buildup of plaque in arteries and supporting healthy blood flow.

Blood sugar control.

Fiber helps slow digestion and keeps blood sugar levels steadier. This is important since high blood sugar can increase the risk of heart disease.

Body weight and fullness.

Fiber can help you feel satisfied after eating, supporting healthy weight management – an important factor for heart health.

Inflammation and blood vessel health.

Antioxidant-rich foods help reduce chronic inflammation and protect blood vessels. Both play a role in the development and progression of heart disease.

HEART-HEALTHY EATING TIPS



- Eat a variety of colorful, nutrient-dense fruits and veggies



- Focus on fiber-rich whole grains



- Prioritize lean protein foods (such as lean meat and poultry, legumes, fish, seafood)



- Include low-fat or fat free dairy products



- Incorporate healthy fats (such as canola oil, olive oil, avocado, nuts, fatty fish)



- Be mindful of added sugars, saturated fat, and sodium

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SIMPLE WAYS TO EAT MORE FRUITS & VEGGIES

Add fruits & veggies throughout the day.

Get the fiber and nutrients you need to support your heart health every time you eat.

Add fruit to your go-to breakfast or snacks.

Like berries on yogurt, banana on toast, or an apple or orange with your afternoon snack.

Build meals around veggies.

Start with veggies when planning meals – think stir-fries, grain bowls, or roasted veggie trays – and add protein and grains from there.

Mix it up for convenience.

Frozen and canned fruits and veggies are a convenient way to add variety, save time and reduce food waste.

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Regular physical activity is also an important part of managing and helping to prevent heart disease.

You can start being active at any age!

If you have never been active or have not been active for a while, it is important to start slowly. Note: Check with your health care team before you begin an exercise program.

Keep motivated!

Pick activities you enjoy and that fit into your lifestyle. Try taking the stairs, dancing, going for a bike ride or taking the dog for a walk.

