

Healthy Habits

Tips for reaching and maintaining your optimum state of health

September is Fruits and Vegetables Month!

A growing body of research shows that fruits and vegetables aren't just "a good idea", they are *critical* to promoting good health. Fruits and vegetables contain essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber that keep you feeling well and may even help protect you from chronic diseases. Still, to get the amount that's recommended, most people need to increase the amount of fruits and vegetables they currently eat every day.

Know what you need

Compared with people who consume a diet with only small amounts of fruits and vegetables, those who eat more generous amounts as part of a healthful diet are likely to have reduced risk of chronic diseases, including stroke and perhaps other cardiovascular diseases, and certain cancers. It's important to know that your daily fruit and vegetable needs depend on your calorie needs which is, in turn, determined by your age, gender and physical activity level. A great resource can be found at www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov. By entering basic information, a "calculator" will give you a good idea of what you need to incorporate into your diet.

On the Go? Lose the "Wait"

Busy lives can benefit from food that's nutritious, yet easy to eat on-the-go, like fresh fruits and vegetables. Fruits and vegetables are also a natural source of energy and give the body many nutrients to keep going strong. Try substituting fruits and vegetables for those high-calorie and high-caffeine foods and snacks to get through the day, too. You may find that you feel better, stay healthier and you may even shed a few of those hard-to-lose pounds! The water and fiber in fruits and vegetables fills you up on fewer calories with less fat than many other quick choices or fast food. To learn more about an overall healthy eating plan, visit MyPyramid.gov.

September 2007

1. 2. 3. 4. 5.

Know your fruits and vegetables?
How many of these can you name?
Find them all at
fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/month/index.html

An Apple a Day? It's a Start

Everyone has heard about the benefits of "an apple a day" but just an apple isn't enough. Fruits and vegetables provide essential vitamins and minerals, fiber, and other substances that are important for good health. If you're bored with apples, there's a wide variety of exotic fruits and vegetables readily available at most supermarkets or stores in your area, too, so don't be afraid to try something new. To get a healthy variety, think color. Eating fruits and vegetables of different colors gives your body a wide range of valuable nutrients, like fiber, folate, potassium, and vitamins A and C. Some examples include green spinach, orange sweet potatoes, black beans, yellow corn, purple plums, red watermelon, and white onions. Many recipes and tips are located at www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov so check it out, find something new and eat healthy!



Answers: 1. kumquat 2. kiwano melon 3. calabazaza 4. feijoa 5. chayote

The material contained in *Healthy Habits* is not intended to be medical advice on any particular matter. Readers should seek appropriate professional advice before acting on the basis of any information contained in this publication. This information is provided courtesy of Optima Health.