

Fruits and Vegetables: An Important Part of Your Diet

One of the best ways to ensure that we are eating a well-balanced diet is to base our meals on **MyPlate**.

MyPlate recommends that you make **half of each meal** fruits and vegetables.

There are a lot of different types of fruit. Have you tried all of these?

Apples	Cherries	Grapefruit	Nectarines	Pomegranates
Apricots	Clementine	Honeydew melon	Oranges	Raisins
Avocados	Coconut	Kiwis	Papayas	Raspberries
Bananas	Cranberries	Lemons	Peaches	Star fruits
Blackberries	Dates	Limes	Pears	Strawberries
Blueberries	Figs	Mandarin oranges	Pineapple	Tangerines
Cantaloupe	Grapes	Mangoes	Plums	Watermelon

There are also a wide variety of vegetables.

Alfalfa sprouts	Brussels sprouts	Greens (Collard, Chard, Kale, Mustard)	Peapods	Squash (Butternut, Zucchini, Dumpling, Patty Pan, Acorn)
Artichokes	Cabbage	Jicama	Green peas	Sweet potatoes
Asparagus	Carrots	Kohlrabi	Bell peppers	Turnips
Bamboo shoots	Cauliflower	Leeks	Jalapeno peppers	Water chestnuts
Bean sprouts	Celery	Mushrooms	Potatoes	Yams
Beans	Corn	Okra	Rutabagas	
Beets	Cucumbers	Onions (red, white, yellow)	Salad greens	
Bok Choy	Eggplant	Radishes	Sauerkraut	
Broccoli	Green onions		Spinach	
			Tomatoes	

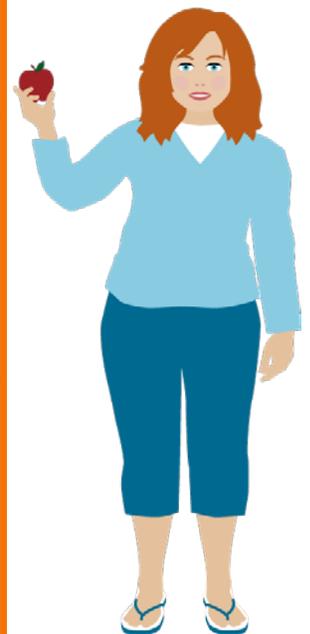
Shopping for Fruits and Vegetables

Fruits and vegetables provide vitamins, minerals, and fiber that our bodies need to stay healthy. They can make a great snack and are an important part of a well-balanced meal.

Tips on Shopping for Fresh Produce:

- Buy only what you need and will use within a few days (although some items, such as apples and potatoes, can be for several weeks).
- Fruits and vegetables that are in season are usually the least expensive and are better quality.
- Examine each item individually, looking for bruises, blemishes, or decay.
- Look for bright color. Older items may appear darkened or brown in color.
- Lightly press on items to check for firmness.

Fresh	When possible, it is best to buy local, fresh produce.
Canned	Most canned food retains the majority of its vitamins and minerals. Some canned foods are high in sodium; try to buy those without added salt.
Frozen	Frozen fruits and vegetables tend to retain most of their nutritional qualities. Try to avoid choices that add cheese sauces, butter topping, sugar, or other condiments.



Add Fruits & Vegetables to Every Meal and Snack

FACT: Only 10% of foods consumed at breakfast are fruits, vegetables, or 100% juice.



ACTION: Add a serving of fruit with breakfast, some raw vegetables to lunch, and a salad to dinner.

FACT: Americans are four times more likely to pick a processed snack than a fruit or vegetable.



ACTION: Select fruits and vegetables for a snack full of vitamins, nutrients, and good taste.

Try these tips for adding more fruits and vegetables to your day:

- ☑ Make fruit and vegetables visible in your home.
- ☑ Microwave vegetables to serve with dinner; when grilling out, add vegetables and fruit.
- ☑ Grab an apple, banana, pear, or other piece of fruit to eat on-the-go.
- ☑ Snack on raw veggies like baby carrots, pepper strips, broccoli, and celery.
- ☑ Pick up ready-made salads from the produce shelf for a quick salad anytime.
- ☑ Microwave a sweet potato for a delicious side dish.
- ☑ Choose fruit for dessert.
- ☑ Pile spinach, tomatoes, peppers, and onions on your pizza (and ask for less cheese).
- ☑ Add strawberries, blueberries, bananas, and other brightly colored fruits to your waffles, oatmeal, toast, or cereal.
- ☑ Stir fresh or frozen vegetables into your pasta, noodles, or omelet.
- ☑ Whip up smoothies made from fresh or frozen berries, ice, and yogurt.
- ☑ Jazz up your soups or sauces with a can of kidney beans, peas, corn, or green beans.

Mindful Eating

Healthy eating is not just about *what* you eat, but also *how* you eat.

Mindful eating is something we can do to bring our focus back to the food we are eating.



What are the drawbacks of mindless eating?

- Less awareness of how much food we're eating
- Less ability to know when we're full

What are the benefits of mindful eating?

- Your brain has time to realize that you are full, which takes about 20 minutes.
- Research shows that when people eat slowly and mindfully they tend to eat less food.
- It can improve the whole experience of eating.
- It helps with learning how to ignore the urges to snack that aren't linked with hunger.
- It can help reduce overeating.

Mindful Eating

How can you eat more slowly?

- Put down your utensils for 10-15 seconds after a few bites.
- Take sips of water (or non-calorie beverage) after every few bites.
- Take small bites and chew slowly. Finish chewing and swallowing each bite before you pick up more food.

Here are some other tips for how to eat mindfully.

Mindful Eating

- ☑ **Focus on your food.** Look at the food on your plate. Notice how each bite feels and tastes. Take time to enjoy the taste and smell of the food.
- ☑ **Create a calm eating environment.** With less stress or chaos, you can pay attention to what you are eating. Turn off the TV and computer, put away newspapers, books, and magazines, and try not to eat on the run.
- ☑ **Learn to refocus on your food after a distraction.** Although it is ideal to eat without distractions such as the TV, computer, phone calls, etc., there will probably be times when you will be interrupted. These are the times that you need to remind yourself to refocus on your food.

Each time you eat, sit down and eat slowly and mindfully. Learn how to enjoy every bite of food so you feel both physically and mentally satisfied at the end of the meal.