

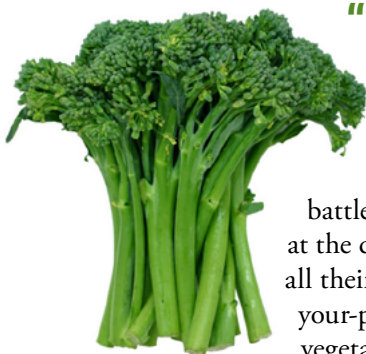


Eat More Veggies

CHALLENGE
Eat 2-3 cups of
vegetables a day.

Requirements to complete this HEALTH CHALLENGE™

1. Read "Eat More Veggies."
2. Eat 2-3 cups or more of vegetables on at least 22 days this month.
3. Keep a record of your completed challenge in case your organization requires documentation.



"Eat your vegetables."

It's a mantra former President George H.W. Bush heard daily from his mom when he was a kid. And it's a regular battle between parents and children at the dinner table. Some people eat all their vegetables as part of a clean-your-plate mentality. Others eat vegetables because they know they're loaded with vitamins and nutrients

needed for good health. But some people need a little more encouragement to eat a variety of vegetables.

Only 26 percent of Americans eat three or more servings of vegetables a day. And the former president was one of them. When Bush was elected, he declared his distaste for broccoli shortly after taking office. Encouragement arrived a few days later. U.S. broccoli growers shipped a 10-ton delivery of this vitamin-rich vegetable directly to the White House. And the First Lady supported the cause. She threatened to serve the president broccoli soup and salad, a broccoli main course, and broccoli ice cream for dessert.

Vegetables provide essential vitamins and minerals, fiber, and other nutrients that are important for good health. Many studies have found that diets rich in fruits and vegetables significantly reduce the risk for cancer and other chronic diseases. If you really don't like broccoli, fine. Just be sure to eat at least 2 to 3 cups a day of the many other vegetables available.

Eat Vegetables, Get Healthy

If you want to improve your health, lose weight, and live longer, eat more vegetables. It's true. Vegetables are low in calories, high in fiber and antioxidants, and have a low glycemic-index.



Many large studies show that a diet rich in vegetables lowers the risk for many chronic diseases. These include heart disease, certain types of cancer, obesity, type 2 diabetes, and high blood pressure.

Studies also show that nutrients in vegetables provide other protective benefits. Vegetables aid in digestion, strengthen the immune system, support bone and tissue growth, help maintain vision, and provide many other benefits. Over time, eating more plant-based foods can have a powerful impact on your health.

Calculate how many vegetables you need daily:
tinyurl.com/ag3vlnk

Take the Veggies Quiz

How much do you know about the health benefits of vegetables? Take this quiz to find out.

T F

1. Eating vegetables may reduce your risk for stroke, cancer, heart disease, and diabetes.
2. Spinach is not a good source of folic acid (needed to form healthy red blood cells).
3. For best health, half your plate should always include a variety of fruits and vegetables.
4. Dietary fiber from vegetables helps reduce LDL "bad" cholesterol levels.
5. Dark leafy greens are not a good source of potassium to help control blood pressure.

1. True 2. False 3. True 4. True 5. False

If you answered any of these statements incorrectly, you may benefit from learning more about the health benefits of vegetables. Vegetables are a rich source of vitamins and nutrients that help prevent many chronic diseases. Adults should eat at least 2 to 3 cups of vegetables a day for best health.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention



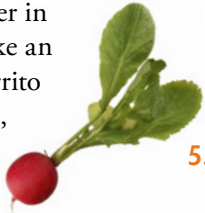
Veggie-size Your Diet

The former President Bush would probably be surprised to know that there are easily more than 1,000 different ways to enjoy broccoli. And that's true for the hundreds of vegetable varieties you can grow in your garden, buy at the store, or get at a local farmer's market. Veggie-size your diet with these 10 ways to eat more vegetables:



1. Discover fast ways to cook

Cook fresh or frozen vegetables in the microwave for a quick-and-easy dish to add to any meal. Steam green beans, carrots or broccoli in a bowl with a little water in the microwave. Or make an omelet or breakfast burrito with bell pepper, onion, spinach, and tomatoes.



2. Plan for snack time

Cut up bell peppers, carrots, or broccoli and store in a plastic bag or container. Instead of going for a candy bar when you need a snack, try these veggies with salad, hummus, or in a veggie wrap.

3. Follow the rainbow

Choose a variety of dark and brightly colored vegetables (red, orange, or dark green). These vegetables contain high levels of lycopene, carotenoids, and antioxidants that protect your health. Try acorn squash, avocados, spinach, or sweet potatoes.



4. Stock your freezer

Frozen vegetables are quick and easy to use. And they're just as nutritious as fresh veggies. Try adding frozen corn, peas, or green beans to some of your favorite dishes or eat as a side dish.



5. Consider canned veggies

Fresh is best. But canned vegetables can be a great addition to meals. Stock your cupboard with canned tomatoes, kidney beans, garbanzo beans, mushrooms, and beets. Choose low-sodium canned foods. And always drain and rinse canned beans.

6. Make your own salad

Add colorful vegetables to your salad like black beans, red bell pepper, shredded radishes, chopped red cabbage, or watercress. Your salad will look good and taste great.



7. Sip on vegetable soup

Make your own vegetable soup. Toss a few ingredients into a slow-cooker and enjoy tomato, butternut squash, or vegetable soup. If you buy canned soup, look for reduced or low-sodium options.

8. Ask for veggies on the side

Many restaurants serve French fries on the side with entrees. Fries are made from potatoes, but it doesn't make them healthy. Instead of fries, ask for a side of vegetables or salad.

9. Celebrate the season

Buy vegetables that are in season at the store or local farmer's market. Fresh vegetables are rich in flavor, cost less, and are loaded with vitamins and nutrients. And if you plan ahead, you can even grow your own. Eat fresh, cook in olive oil, bake, or steam in the microwave.

10. Try something new

It's easy to stick with the foods you're familiar with. But eating a variety of vegetables is best for your health. Try two or three new vegetables this month. Add them to a dish you already enjoy. Or look up a recipe online to try something new.

Eat more vegetables. Do it one serving at a time. And you'll improve your health, reduce your risk for disease, and live longer.

Try these tasty vegetable recipes: tinyurl.com/k7hud6j

Vegetables Prevent Heart Disease and Diabetes



Heart disease and diabetes are among the top 10 leading causes of death in the United States. Combined, they claim the lives of an estimated 666,760 people each year. Yet research shows that eating vegetables can significantly reduce your risk for both of these diseases.

In the Harvard-based Nurses' Health Study, researchers followed 110,000 people for 14 years. They tracked their eating habits and found that those who had 8 or more servings of fruits and vegetables a day were 30 percent less likely to have a heart attack or stroke. They also found that the most nutrient-dense vegetables included lettuce, spinach, Swiss chard, mustard greens, broccoli, cauliflower, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, bok choy, and kale.

In a separate study of 4,413 people who followed the Dash Diet (tinyurl.com/dc87g), researchers found that eating fresh fruits and vegetables reduced the risk of diabetes. Those who had 8 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables a day cut their risk for diabetes by 46 percent.



Sources: Harvard School of Public Health.; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.; U.S. Department of Agriculture.; Harvard School of Public Health.; National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute.; Journal of the National Cancer Institute.





Eat More Veggies

CHALLENGE
Eat 2-3 cups of vegetables a day.

Instructions

1. Post this calendar where you will see it daily (bathroom, kitchen, bedroom, etc.).
2. Record the number of days you eat at least 2-3 cups of vegetables.
3. Use the calendar to record the actions and choices you make to help eating more vegetables become a regular part of your life.
4. At the end of the month, total the number of days you ate at least 2-3 cups of vegetables. You must do this on at least 22 days this month to complete this challenge. Then keep up the practice for a lifetime of best health.

MONTH:							HC = Health Challenge™	ex. min. = exercise minutes
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY	Weight & weekly summary	
HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____		
HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____		
HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____		
HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____		
HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____	HC [] ex. min. _____		

_____ Number of days this month I ate at least 2-3 cups of vegetables

_____ Number of days this month I got 30+ minutes of physical activity such as brisk walking or biking

Other wellness projects completed this month:

Name _____ Date _____