

## Fruit & vegetables and your health

### There's a simple way to improve your health and to stay healthy.

Better still, it's easy... and... everybody can do it!

**How?** Just eat more fruit and vegetables as part of a balanced, regular diet and a healthy active lifestyle.

**Why?** Because fruit and vegetables are naturally good.

They're low in fat, salt and added sugar. They also contain fibre and the important vitamins, minerals and nutrients that your body needs to stay healthy and to protect against diseases.

Research\* shows that if you regularly eat lots of fruit and vegetables you have a lower risk of developing type 2 diabetes, stroke, heart disease, high blood pressure and some forms of cancer later in life.

Eating plenty of fruit and vegetables also helps maintain a healthy weight.

Fruit and vegetables are key to a healthy diet. You can lift energy levels and boost your immune system today and lead a longer, more active life in a healthier body, tomorrow...

What are you waiting for?

**Start today... and discover for yourself why fruit and veg are great.**



### 1 serve equals:

**1 piece of medium sized fruit**  
i.e apple, banana, orange, pear etc.



or **2 pieces of small sized fruit**  
i.e apricots, plums, kiwi fruit etc.



or **1 cup canned or chopped fruit**



or **4 dried apricot halves**



or **1 1/2 tablespoons sultanas**



## How much fruit should I eat every day?

### At least 2 serves of fruit are needed as part of a balanced diet.

This is so easy! If you want more vitality and better health get ready to start tasting a wide variety of delicious fruits. You may enjoy it more than you think.

Start with strawberries or sliced banana on cereal for breakfast. Treat yourself to a juicy pear or a crisp apple for a fresh snack.

Or, maybe you'd prefer a banana smoothie and a kiwi fruit for a morning energy boost! Then some sliced pineapple and melon with yoghurt after dinner.

For luscious desserts try stewed, poached or baked plums, apples, pears, rhubarb, apricots and berries or add fruits to jelly, custard, rice puddings and pancakes.

Whatever you choose, with 2 serves of fruit, you're off to a healthier lifestyle.

See... eating the right amount of fresh fruit daily is that easy.

Not to mention delicious.

## How many vegetables should I eat every day?

### At least 5 serves of vegetables each day as part of a balanced diet is what you need to enjoy a healthier and more energetic life.

Try breakfast with mushrooms and spinach on toast. Then, make yourself a super salad sandwich for lunch, packed with tomatoes, sliced cucumber, sprouts, grated carrot and iceberg lettuce. Later, enjoy a baked potato, steamed zucchini, pumpkin and broccoli with grilled steak or chicken for a main meal.

Or, maybe you'd prefer grilled tomatoes for breakfast, a delicious tuna spinach salad

or chunky veggie soup with lentils for lunch, and perhaps toss some snow peas, capsicum and cabbage with chopped onion into a beef and noodle stir-fry for dinner?

Either way, you've already had enough vegetables to stay fitter and healthier, longer...

It's that easy. Not to mention very tasty!

Add new dimensions to your meals... Chopped veggies are great in omelettes, soups, salads, stews and casseroles.

Grated zucchini, carrot, pumpkin, sweet potato and beetroot can be added to patties, rissoles, muffins and pikelets... Just keep going!

### 1 serve equals:

**1 cup salad vegetables**



or **75g (1/2 cup) cooked vegetables**



or **75g (1/2 cup) cooked dried beans, peas or lentils**



or **1 medium potato**



## So what is a balanced diet?

These days everyone has a different opinion about what makes us healthy and how to lead healthy lives...

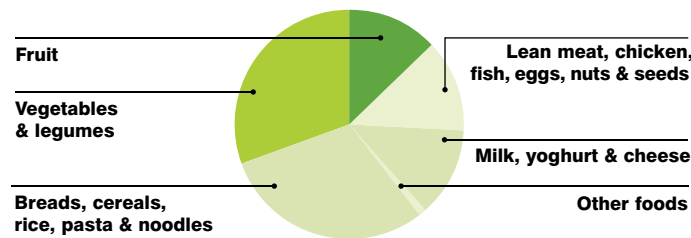
The reality is that you need many different nutrients for good health and the amount you eat needs to suit your stage in life and your activity level.

### For good health eat a variety of foods, taking particular note of what to 'eat most' and what to 'eat least'.

Rely on fruits and vegetables to put variety into your diet. Take full advantage of the range of flavours, colours, textures and aromas to make each day different and your healthy, balanced diet need never be boring.

### Tips for good health:

- Drink plenty of water. Water is vital for good health.
- Use fresh herbs and spices to add extra flavour to your meals ahead of salt.
- Go for healthy takeaway like pita wraps, baked potatoes, kebabs, vegetable pizzas, tabouli and healthy desserts like fruit salad or a fruit smoothie.
- Balance physical activity and food intake to help maintain a healthy body weight—aim for 30 minutes of activity most days.
- When possible enjoy food with people you care about—this will give you plenty of incentive to create healthy, interesting meals.



### Eat most:

Include some of these foods in all your meals and snacks:

- **Fruit, vegetables & legumes:** Choose a variety of fruits and vegetables—raw, cooked, frozen, canned or dried. Aim to have a range of different colours.
- **Breads, cereals, rice pasta & noodles:** Use wholegrain where possible and try different grains like barley, oats or rye.

### Eat moderately:

- **Lean meat, chicken, fish, eggs & nuts:** Choose lean meats, fish (including sardines, tuna & salmon), nuts and seeds.
- **Milk, yoghurt & cheese:** Use low fat dairy products.

### Eat least:

- **Other foods:** Mono & polyunsaturated margarines & oils, sugar and foods containing a lot of sugar and fats.

## Eat different fruits & veg every day

### Good variety equals good nutrition.

Variety is important because different fruits and vegetables contain different nutrients. For example some contain vitamin C (strawberries, capsicum, citrus), while others (asparagus and spinach) are high in folate. If you eat a variety you stand a very good chance of getting the nutrients you need.

### Select a mix of fruits and vegetables from different family groups.



### Let colours guide you to a varied diet.

When buying and serving fruit and vegetables, look to include a variety of colours including green, white, yellow/orange, blue/purple and red. Different colours generally indicate different combinations of nutrients. So, put a range of colours on your plate for maximum nutrients and appeal!

### Go with variety.

Aim to try a new recipe once a week and to buy a new fruit or vegetable as part of your weekly shopping.

### Different family groups:

|  |  |  |   |
|--|--|--|---|
| <b>Pome</b><br>apple<br>pear<br>quince                                   | <b>Citrus</b><br>orange<br>grapefruit<br>mandarin<br>lime    | <b>Stonefruit</b><br>nectarine<br>apricot<br>peach<br>plum | <b>Tropical &amp; Exotic Fruits</b><br>banana<br>mango<br>avocado |
| <b>Berries</b><br>strawberry<br>blueberry<br>cranberry                   | <b>Herbs</b><br>basil<br>coriander<br>dill                   | <b>Solanaceae</b><br>tomato<br>eggplant<br>chilli          | <b>Leafy Greens</b><br>lettuce<br>spinach<br>Asian greens         |
| <b>Crucifer</b><br>brussel sprouts<br>cabbage<br>cauliflower<br>broccoli | <b>Cucurbits</b><br>pumpkin<br>cucumber<br>melon<br>zucchini | <b>Allium</b><br>onion<br>garlic<br>shallot                | <b>Root</b><br>potato<br>sweet potato<br>yam                      |
| <b>Edible plant stems</b><br>celery<br>asparagus                         | <b>Edible fungi</b><br>white, brown & exotic mushrooms       | <b>Fresh legumes</b><br>fresh beans<br>peas<br>snow peas   | <b>Dry legumes</b><br>dried beans<br>chickpeas<br>lentils         |

Note: there are many more examples in most family groups.

## Feel better today, tomorrow & for life

\* "There is a lot of research available on the role of substances called phytochemicals or 'plant chemicals'. These are the biologically active substances in foods that help to protect you from some diseases."

\*Healthy eating—Fruit & Vegetables', Fact Sheet, Better Health Channel (www.betterhealthchannel.vic.gov.au)

Fruit and vegetables are rich in these phytochemicals.



**Follow the seasons**

Many fruits and vegetables are available most of the year, others have peak seasons and some may only be available for a short time.

To find the freshest, ripest and best flavours, get to know which fruit and vegetables are at their peak. At the peak there's usually plenty around which also means that it's inexpensive and you'll get great value for money.

Enjoy seasonal produce with a new or favourite recipe. It's a great talking point for friends and family, brings new pleasure to the table and importantly provides a nutritious way of varying your diet.



Celebrate **spring** with asparagus, field-grown tomatoes, herbs & mangoes; **summer** with berries, nectarines & peaches, lettuce, cucumbers and capsicum; **autumn** with pears, apples, brussel sprouts, green beans & persimmon; and, **winter** with cabbages, cauliflower, pumpkins & custard apples.

**Keep your eye on what's in peak season and start selecting nature's finest fruit and vegetables when they're at their very best.**

Enjoy what you are eating. It's important to be aware of what goes into each meal. Slow down and savour every bite.

**Ask your local retailer what's in peak season today.**



**Start kids early**

**Developing bodies need fruit and vegetables.**

For babies, toddlers and teens a variety of healthy foods is essential for good health and development. By eating well, your children will have the energy they need to play, concentrate better, learn, sleep better and build stronger teeth and bones.

**Babies and Toddlers.**

Most babies eat finely mashed fruit and vegetables as one of their first solid foods—an ideal start that's healthy and naturally free of additives.

- Try gradually adding variety like turnip, zucchini, carrot as new flavours.
- Around 8 months try thicker textures and offering pieces of fruit or cooked vegetables as finger foods.

Young children soon develop likes and dislikes and these change frequently. Keep offering them a variety of fruits and vegetables.



**Tips for parents:**

- **Get kids involved.** It's a great way to introduce new tastes. Take them shopping for fruit & veg then, let them help wash, use a peeler and prepare a salad or a fruit salad with you.
- **Lead by example, enjoy fruits & veg with your kids.** Give them real choices. If they don't like vegetables mashed—try them raw or grated or baked—something will hit the spot!
- **Keep 'snack size' fruit & veg in the fridge** and always have a bowl of fresh fruit on the bench.
- Include delicious fruit & vegetables in the **school lunchbox.**
- **Add more fruits & vegetables** to family recipes.
- **Offer fruit and a glass of water** ahead of sweet or fizzy drinks.
- **Keep offering healthy choices.** Kids will eat what they become used to and their tastes do change with age.

**Set your kids up for a lifetime of good health.**

**Start a habit... make colourful, juicy, crunchy fruits and vegetables part of most snacks and every meal.**

**Prepare for health**

**Take pleasure in selecting and buying fruits and vegetables for your favourite recipes.**

To get the best out of fruit and vegetables, it is important that you prepare and cook them so that maximum vitamin and mineral content is retained.

**Some quick tips:**

- Avoid over-cooking vegetables as this can destroy nutrients.
- Cooking matters! Stir-fry, grill, microwave, bake or steam using non-stick cookware and monounsaturated oils.
- Use a sharp knife when cutting fresh fruits to avoid bruising fruits.
- Cut off only the 'inedible' parts of vegetables as sometimes the best nutrients are found in the skin, just below the skin or in the leaves.



**Be original and get the best**

With so much advertising, it's becoming a lot harder to pick 'healthy' products from 'unhealthy' ones.

Don't be confused.

**Fruits and vegetables remain a reliable, natural source of health and vitality for you and your family. They come in many shapes and sizes, they're easy to prepare and even come in their very own recyclable packaging.**

- Make at least 2 serves of fruit and 5 serves of vegetables your goal each day. It's an easy way of making sure your body is as fit and healthy as it needs to be... day in... day out...



**Need more information?**

If you'd like to learn more about fresh fruits and vegetables, simply log on to the websites below:

**marketfresh.com.au**  
**goforyourlife.vic.gov.au**  
**or call 1300 73 98 99**

There you'll find lots of extra information—including healthy fact sheets, fun school activities, A–Z seasonal charts, and hundreds of free recipes for quick, healthy meals. For personal health advice speak to your local doctor, dietitian or health centre.

**Your guide to:**

**FRUIT AND VEG FOR HEALTH**

- Get the fibre and drive you need by eating a piece of fruit instead of energy drinks with sugar and other additives.
- Snack on fruit, cherry tomatoes, vegetable sticks & dips, dried fruit and nuts instead of energy bars, chocolate, chips, pastries & deep fried foods.

**Think more about what goes into your body.**

Eat well and you'll be stronger, have better concentration and more stamina. Your hair, skin, teeth and nails should start to show the results. You'll feel great!



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