

***SMART Start* March 2009**

Focus on Fruits and Veggies!

SMART Start Requirements:

Eat at least 2 fruits and 3 vegetable servings per day. One serving equals:

- 1 small piece of fruit
- 1 cup sliced fresh, canned in natural juices or frozen
- 1 cup 100% juice
- ½ cup dried fruit
- ½ c. cooked vegetables
- 1 c raw vegetables
- 1c tomato or vegetable juice (low sodium)



Fruits and vegetables contain essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber that may help protect you from chronic diseases such as cancer, diabetes and heart disease. An increased intake of fruits and vegetables also decreases the risk of high blood pressure, asthma, stroke, cataracts, age-related macular degeneration, constipation, urinary tract infections, diverticulosis, obesity and wrinkling of the skin. In addition, substituting fruits and vegetables for higher-calorie foods can be part of a successful weight loss strategy.



Tips to Include more Fruits and Vegetables

- Eat more dark green veggies such as spinach, kale, greens, broccoli, asparagus
- Eat more dark orange veggies such as carrots, pumpkin, squash
- Eat a variety of fruits (think color) such as red apples, purple grapes, yellow bananas, oranges, etc.
- Choose fresh, frozen or canned (in natural juices)
- Go easy on fruit juices and dried fruit
- Buy fresh fruits and vegetables in season. They cost less and are likely to be at their peak flavor.

- Stock up on frozen vegetables for quick and easy cooking in the microwave.
- Buy vegetables that are easy to prepare. Pick up pre-washed bags of salad greens and add baby carrots or grape tomatoes for a salad in minutes.
- Buy packages of veggies such as baby carrots or celery sticks for quick snacks.
- Add lettuce and tomato to your sandwich.
- Vary your veggie choices to keep meals interesting.
- Try crunchy vegetables, raw or lightly steamed.
- Keep a bowl of whole fruit on the table, counter, or in the refrigerator.
- Refrigerate cut-up fruit to store for later.
- Buy fresh fruits in season when they may be less expensive and at their peak flavor.
- Consider convenience when shopping. Buy pre-cut packages of fruit (such as melon or pineapple chunks) for a healthy snack in seconds. Choose packaged fruits that do not have added sugars.
- Plan a **Healthy Plate** made up of $\frac{1}{2}$ vegetables and/or fruits, $\frac{1}{4}$ whole grains or beans and $\frac{1}{4}$ (or less) animal protein.



For more information about fruits and veggies, visit:

www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.gov