



FACT SHEET

TIPS TO INCLUDE MORE FRUIT AND VEG IN YOUR DAY

All vegetables and fruits are healthy! Fruit and vegetables may be any colour, shape, texture or variety. They can be fresh, frozen, canned or dried. They may be raw, cooked, steamed, boiled, microwaved, stirfried or roasted. Variety is most important.

Try to choose different coloured fruit and vegetables, particularly yellow, green and red: melon, carrot, pumpkin, stone fruit, broccoli, spinach, leafy greens and tomato are examples.

Rather than searching for new recipes, try to increase the variety or amount of vegetables added to your favourite family recipes such as pasta sauce, soup or stir-fries.

Include vegetables and fruit in snacks too. Try corn on the cob, jacket potato, plain home-made popcorn, cut up vegetables with salsa or yoghurt dips, muffins, pikelets or cakes made with added fruit or vegetables. Enjoy frozen fruit or vegetable segments, skewers of fruit, stewed fruit, fruit crumbles, canned fruits in juice, fruit salad or a fruit platter.

Tips for different age groups

With children, try to involve them in decisions about fruit and vegetables, keep offering fruit and vegetables even when children seem to avoid eating them as children's tastes do change with age. And remember to praise your child for healthy eating.

Show your children that you enjoy eating fruit and vegetables. They learn a lot more from what you do than what you say.

It is important to keep offering vegetables and fruit in a variety of ways, as children learn to eat what is familiar to them and it often takes several tries before children learn to like something new.

Make it easy. Fruit is more likely to be eaten if it is peeled. A little lemon juice will help prevent cut fruit from going brown. Lightly cooked or raw vegetables (no hard pieces for children under four) may be better liked than soft cooked vegetables.

Include vegetables and fruit in a variety of ways, and at most meals and snacks. Often, vegetables can be part of the meal without children even realising.

In the first year of life fruits and vegetables should be introduced after cereals. It is important to introduce new textures, tastes and colours. First foods are finely mashed but quickly grade up in texture.

For toddlers and preschoolers offer healthy and regular snacks between meals. Encourage eating with the family and try a wide variety of foods and tastes.

For school age children encourage them to be involved in their own lunch preparation and the choice of foods to include. Praise your child when they choose well.

Some ideas for school lunches and after school snacks that include fruit and vegetables:

- vegetable sticks with dips or a small container with mixed vegetables such as cherry tomatoes, carrot sticks, cucumber
- sweet potato and cheddar muffins
- carrot and zucchini slice
- banana bread
- dried fruit with cheese and biscuits
- apple pancakes
- banana rice custard
- quick sesame apricot slice
- and of course fresh fruit.

Eating fruit and veg on a budget

Sometimes vegetables and fruit can seem expensive. To keep costs down:

- Choose fresh fruit and vegetables in season; not only are they cheaper they will also be most flavoursome and at their best.
- Use frozen and canned fruit and vegetables as an alternative to fresh. They are nutritious, often cheaper, quick and easy to prepare, easily stored and available in remote communities.
- Combine canned, frozen or dried fruit and vegetables with fresh, readily available forms whenever possible to maximise nutrient intake. Local and home-grown produce may also be a healthy and rewarding option.
- Always choose 'reduced' or 'no added' fat, salt or sugar products. Encourage varieties of fruit canned in water/natural juice or without added sugar or syrup.

- Markets also tend to be cheaper than supermarkets, particularly if you catch them when they are packing up for the day. Alternatively opt for supermarket-branded canned or frozen fruit and vegetables.
- Shop two to three times a week – you will have less to carry. Fresher fruit and vegetables keep their nutritional value longer!

For more tips and recipe ideas, go to the website: www.healthyactive.gov.au or www.gofor2and5.com.au

Information in this fact sheet is taken from:

http://www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au/hav/articles.nsf/pages/Vegetables_and_fruit_for_children?Open

http://www.goforyourlife.vic.gov.au/hav/articles.nsf/pages/Kids_Go_for_your_life?open