

# Health Awareness

A County Health Pool Publication



September 2007

## Fruits and Veggies, More Is Better

**How many fruits and vegetables should you and your family members eat for good health?**



**T**he government has some news for you: Forget five a day. More is better!

The CDC and the Produce for Better Health Foundation have launched a national campaign with the message, “Fruits & Veggies -- More Matters.”

The new slogan replaces the old “5 a Day” campaign, which dates back to the early ‘90s. The reason? Under the U.S. government’s latest food guidelines, five servings of fruits and vegetables may not be enough. Adults need anywhere from 7-13 cups of produce daily to get all the health benefits of fruits and vegetables – including possible protection against obesity, heart disease, type 2 diabetes, and cancer.

### The New Slogan

A healthy diet requires some planning and purpose and an effort to include a variety of fruits and vegetables in your meals. If you look closely at how you eat, you might find you aren’t getting enough. Five to nine a servings a day is recommended. You might find that making a few small changes will ensure that you’re eating a healthy, balanced diet.

### Making It Work

But for many of us, it’s been a challenge to fit even five servings of fruits and veggies into our daily diets. How can we hope to eat as many as 13 cups? It’s really not so difficult, says Elizabeth Ward, MS, RD, author of *The Pocket Idiot’s Guide to the New Food Pyramids*. She offers these tips to help you get there:

- For peak flavor and good value, buy fresh produce in season. But keep in mind that “flash-frozen” or canned without salt or heavy syrup can be just as good as locally grown produce.
- Always keep a stash of frozen vegetables on hand to toss into soups, salads, stews, and egg dishes or to microwave for an easy side dish.
- Experiment with new types of fruits and veggies -- like a broccoli slaw salad mix, or pomegranate juice. Remember that just because you didn’t like certain fruits and veggies as a child doesn’t mean you won’t like them now.
- Eat a salad full of fruits and/or veggies each night with dinner.

(Over)



## Fruits and Veggies . . . (Continued)

Just go easy on the dressing and high-fat toppings.

- Grill fruits and vegetables to make them sweeter and more delicious.
- Keep a bowl of fruit on the counter and some cut-up vegetables in the refrigerator for healthy snacks.
- Remember that while 100% fruit juice is a good choice, whole or cut-up fruit has the added benefit of fiber.
- Whip up a smoothie made with fruit and low-fat or nonfat yogurt for a quick, nourishing snack or meal.

## The Power of Produce

There's plenty of scientific evidence to document the health benefits of a diet rich in fruits and vegetables. Fruits and veggies are brimming with disease-fighting phytochemicals, antioxidants, vitamins, minerals, fiber, water, complex carbohydrates, and protein. Not only that, they're naturally low in sodium and calories, cholesterol-free and virtually fat-free.

Sources: [www.webmd.com](http://www.webmd.com).



## No Excuses: Eat Your Fruits and Vegetables

We all know that fruits and vegetables can improve our health in a powerful way. But we seem to keep coming up with reasons why we can't eat more of them. **What's your excuse?** Let's consider a few excuses that you may have offered at one time.

### It's not convenient to eat fruits and vegetables.

"Out of sight, out of mind" is the key here. If fruits and vegetables aren't in front of us when we are eating or choosing what to eat, we are less likely to eat them.

*How to overcome this excuse:*

- Keep ready-to-eat fruit out where you can see it. Keep whole fruit and dried fruit sitting on your kitchen counter. Put cut fruit and 100% juice front and center in your refrigerator so you see it when you open the door.

### I don't like fruits and vegetables

Some people say they don't eat enough fruits and vegetables because they simply aren't interested. It's more fun to eat french fries or nachos.

*How to overcome this excuse:*

- Add fruits and vegetables to foods you like. Add fruit to yogurt, oatmeal, pancakes, French toast, cottage cheese, etc. Add vegetables to chili, stew, casseroles, pasta, pasta salad, omelets, pizza, and so on. You can also dip raw veggies in your favorite light salad dressing.

## Benefits Corner

What can be found on [www.ctsi.org](http://www.ctsi.org) for CHP members?

- Benefit Summaries for Medical, Dental
- Plan Documents for Medical and Dental
- Health Awareness (CHP's Monthly Newsletter)
- Medical, Dental, Retail Rx and Mail Order Claim Forms
- List of current CHP Board of Director's
- CHP Board of Director and Member Meeting Schedule
- Links to Anthem and VSP

## MARK YOUR CALENDAR for the CHP 2008 Renewal Meeting

September 13, 2007 at 10:00 am  
CTSI Office

Please RSVP to Keenya Howard at [khoward@ctsi.org](mailto:khoward@ctsi.org) or  
call 303-861-0507 ext 123