

Creating Health & Nutrition Fact Sheets

Tip

Purchase fresh fruit in season and frozen or canned in winter months to stretch food dollars.

Nutrition Information

Fruit is one of nature's perfect foods. Fruits are naturally low in fat, sodium, and calories. They are good sources of fiber; none contain cholesterol. Fruits also are important sources of many nutrients. These include potassium, vitamin C, and folate (folic acid).

Potassium

Potassium helps to reduce blood pressure in those with high blood pressure. Fruits rich in potassium may also reduce the risk of developing kidney

Fantastic Fruits

stones and protect against bone loss. Fruits high in potassium include:

- bananas
- cantaloupe
- dried plums and prune juice
- dried peaches and apricots
- honeydew melon
- orange juice

Vitamin C

Vitamin C is important for growth and repair of all body tissues; it helps to heal cuts and wounds, and keeps teeth and gums healthy. Fruits high in vitamin C include:

- citrus fruits
- kiwi
- guava
- strawberries
- pineapple
- mango

Folate

Folate (folic acid) helps your body form red blood cells. Women of child-bearing age who become pregnant should consume adequate folate. This reduces the risk of neural tube defects and brain development problems as the fetus grows. Having adequate folate in your diet helps in heart health. Fruits high in folate include the following:

- oranges
- cantaloupe
- papaya
- bananas

Other Benefits

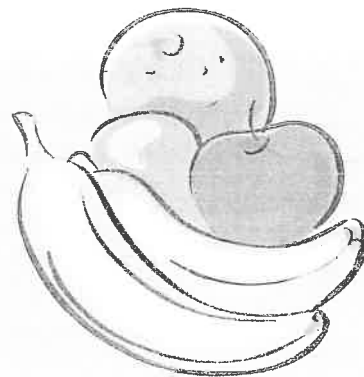
Eating a diet rich in fruit as part of an overall healthful diet may reduce the risk for:

- stroke and coronary heart diseases;
- diabetes;
- certain cancers, such as mouth, stomach, and colorectal cancer;
- weight gain by lowering overall calorie intake.

Tips Affecting Different Age Groups

How Much Fruit Should I Eat Each Day?

The amount of fruit you need to eat depends on your age, sex, and level of physical activity. In general, adults need 1 ½ to 2 cups of fruit each day. School-age children need 1 ½ cups, and teens need 1 ½ to 2 ½ cups.



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What Counts as a Cup?

1 cup of fresh or frozen fruit, 1 cup of 100 percent fruit juice, or ½ cup of dried fruit can be considered equivalent to 1 cup from the fruit group. Limit juice to 1 cup per day to avoid excess weight gain.

OTHER EXAMPLES OF SERVINGS EQUAL TO 1 CUP OF FRUIT

- Apple—one small or ½ large
- Banana—one small or ½ large
- Cantaloupe—1 cup chunks or 1 medium wedge
- Dried Fruit (raisins)—½ cup
- Grapes—1 cup or 32 seedless
- Grapefruit—1 medium
- Orange or pear—1 large
- Plums—3 medium or 2 large
- Raisins—¼ cup
- Strawberries—8 large berries or 1 cup sliced
- Watermelon—1 small wedge (1 inch thick)

Tips for Increasing Your Fruit Intake

- Keep a bowl of whole fruit on the table, counter, or cut up in the refrigerator.
- Buy fruits that are dried, frozen, and canned (in water or juice) as well as fresh so that you always have a supply on hand.

Examine Your Choices

Food	What I do now	What I plan to buy/change
<i>Example:</i> Eat more fruit	Only drink juice; eat little fruit	Purchase fresh fruits in season and add fruit to my lunch and as an afternoon snack.

My Goal:

- Consider convenience when shopping. Buy precut packages of fruit (such as melon or pineapple chunks) for a healthy snack.
- Select fruit canned in 100% fruit juice or water rather than syrup.
- Make fruit kabobs using pineapple chunks, bananas, grapes, and berries.
- Top off a bowl of hot or cold cereal with some berries or a banana.
- When eating out, choose options such as sliced apples, mixed fruit cup, or 100% fruit juices.
- Individual containers of fruits like peaches or applesauce are easy to pack in lunches.
- For dessert, try baked apples, pears, or a fresh fruit salad.

Fruit Smoothie

Combine 6 to 8 ice cubes, 1 cup skim milk, 8 ounces low-fat vanilla yogurt, and 10 strawberries in a blender. Serve at once. (Various fruits may be used in the recipe; try banana, blueberries, mandarin oranges.)

Nutrition Information

Per 1-cup serving: 180 calories, 11 g protein, 29 g carbohydrates, 2 g fiber, 2 g fat, 1 g saturated fat, 150 mg sodium, 320 mg calcium

This is a great low-calorie, high-calcium recipe.

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Sources: www.ChooseMyPlate.gov
and the Center for Disease Control Website,
www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov

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