

Food for Thought

May 2024

Choose Veggies Everyday

Everyone can enjoy and benefit from eating more vegetables. They are packed full of vitamins and minerals. See how many different ones you can add to your day. Most people need around 2 ½ cups of vegetables per day. Try to include a wide variety of colors of vegetables every day; green, red, orange, yellow, purple and white for good health.

Here are some other veggie tips:

Buy vegetables that can help you save money and time.

- Choose in season vegetables that are on sale to save money and they will be at their peak flavor as well.
- Frozen or low sodium canned vegetables can often save you time in the kitchen since you will not need to wash, slice, or chop them.
- For a quick meal, add chickpeas along with sliced carrots and bell peppers to cooked whole wheat pasta.
- Don't forget to add a bag of frozen vegetables to all of your soups and casseroles.



Cutting back on sodium.

- Look for “no salt added” or “reduced sodium” on the label of canned vegetables to cut back on your sodium intake.
- Rinsing canned vegetables before eating them can also reduce their sodium content. For best flavor, use canned vegetables immediately after opening.
- Select fresh vegetables that are in season or better yet, grow your own. Try growing some vegetables such as squash, snap peas and tomatoes. SNAP benefits can be used to purchase food producing seeds and plants.

Be a role model for your children.

- Have celery and carrot sticks, cucumber & pepper slices and snap peas available for your kids to enjoy as a healthy snack. Store your pre sliced veggies in airtight containers.
- Remember to focus on making half your plate vegetables and fruits.
- Let your children see you enjoying these healthy snacks daily.

Use herbs and seasoning to add flavor to your vegetables.

- Fresh herbs are also easy to grow at home.
- Try adding basil, dill or parsley to your favorite dishes for varied flavor.
- You may also buy a store brand blend of herbs and spices which will last for some time and cost less than the name brand.
- Avoid seasonings containing salt

What's in Season for May?

		
Blackberries	Peaches	Pineapple
- Apricots	- Parsnips	
- Artichokes	- Peas	
- Asparagus	- Plums	
- Bell Peppers	- Raspberries	
- Blueberries	- Rhubarb	
- Brussels Sprouts	- Scallions	
- Celery	- Shallots	
- Cherries	- Strawberries	
- Leeks	- Zucchini	
- Mandarins		

Visit produceforkids.com for more info & recipes!

Healthy Power Bowls

1. Ace Your Base

Start with a base of $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{3}{4}$ cup of your favorite cooked grain such as quinoa, brown rice, farro, bulgur, barley and even steel cut oats to add bulk, along with nutrient-rich whole grains and fiber.

Make-Ahead Tip: When cooking grains, make a double batch and store the leftovers so they are readily available for fast recipes like power bowls.



2. Add Protein Power

Choose lean protein like grilled chicken, pulled pork tenderloin, broiled salmon, tuna or shrimp. Or if you are craving a plant-powered bowl, use drained and rinsed beans, cooked lentils, seared tofu, scrambled eggs or roasted nuts.

3. Pile on the Veggies

Fill your power bowl to the brim with a colorful variety of vegetables to add an abundance of vitamins, minerals, antioxidants and fiber. Of course, vegetables also contribute to the flavor, texture and eye-appeal of your finished bowl.

Time-Saving Tip: Incorporate recipe-ready, pre-cut vegetables, fresh salsa and prepared guacamole right from your supermarket's produce department for a fuss-free option.

4. Top it Off

Add sauces and other garnishes to bring the flavors of the ingredients together. Then, grab a fork and dig in!

Asian – Try reduced-sodium soy, teriyaki or Szechuan sauce, fresh ginger, sesame oil or water chestnuts.

Mexican – Try fresh cilantro, lime juice, jalapeño peppers, queso fresco, salsa or avocado.

Greek – Try crumbled feta cheese, Kalamata olives, extra virgin olive oil, cucumber, lemon juice, fresh dill or non-fat plain Greek yogurt.

Sources: https://s3.amazonaws.com/assets.cce.cornell.edu/attachments/43455/ESNY_News_SPRING_2020.pdf?1585674687;
<https://fruitsandveggies.org/stories/insiders-viewpoint-make-nutritious-power-bowls/> Retrieved 5/01/24

Eat Smart Idaho can help you learn how to eat well for less. For information on Eat Smart Idaho classes, contact the Nutrition Instructor in your county:

Panhandle: Benewah, Bonner, Boundary, Kootenai & Shoshone Counties
208-292-2525

North Central Idaho: Clearwater, Idaho, Latah, Lewis, & Nez Perce Counties
208-883-2267



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