

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF A DIET HIGH IN FRUITS AND VEGETABLES?

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Photo Credit fruit and vegetables on a pile studio isolated image by dinostock from Fotolia.com

The average person should get at least five servings of fruits and vegetables per day; in most cases, a serving is 1 cup. Most people only get about three daily servings, reports the Harvard School of Public Health. Incorporating plenty of produce into your daily diet offers protection from many health conditions, supports a healthy weight and helps you reach the daily recommendations for many nutrients.

MAINTAINS A HEALTHY WEIGHT

Fruits and vegetables are naturally low in fat and calories, but they provide bulk to your diet, filling you up without filling you out. This is due to the fiber content of most produce. Fiber is a nutrient that controls weight by satisfying hunger and preventing binge eating. Adding more fruits and vegetables to your diet is a simple way to prevent obesity. Eating fruit for a snack or serving steamed vegetables for dinner are two ways to increase your intake.

5 Foods you must not eat:

Cut down a bit of stomach fat every day by never eating these 5 foods.

[Trimdownclub.com](#)

LOWERS RISK OF DISEASES

A diet high in fruits and vegetables plays a role in the prevention of many diseases. The high fiber content of most fruits and vegetables keeps cholesterol levels low, promotes

healthy digestion and reduces your risk of developing diabetes and heart disease. Fruits and vegetables high in potassium -- including bananas, avocados and potatoes -- help regulate a healthy blood pressure. Vitamins and antioxidants that are present in fruits and vegetables reduce your risk of macular degeneration and support the health of your eyes throughout your lifetime.

PREVENTS CANCER

According to the Iowa State University Extension, a diet that contains a variety of fruits and vegetables has the potential to prevent at least 20 percent of cancer cases. This includes cancer of the stomach, lungs, mouth and colon. Fruits and vegetables are high in antioxidants, including vitamins A, C and E. These antioxidants fight the free-radical damage that leads to the development of cancer. Include plenty of different types of produce into your diet each day for maximum benefit.

PREVENTS BIRTH DEFECTS

Folic acid, or folate, is one of the most important nutrients that women of childbearing age need. This nutrient prevents fetal neural-tube defects, such as spina bifida. This vitamin plays a role in the healthy development of red blood cells. If you are pregnant or could become pregnant, be sure to eat plenty of fruits and vegetables that are high in folate. Good choices include oranges, spinach, broccoli and beans. Overall, a healthy diet supports the growth of a fetus, and incorporating a variety of fruits and vegetables into your diet will help ensure that your baby does not develop birth defects.

REFERENCES

- Harvard School of Public Health: Vegetables and Fruits: Get Plenty Every Day
- MayoClinic.com: Dietary Fiber: Essential for a Healthy Diet
- USDA: Inside the Pyramid: Why Is It Important to Eat Vegetables?
- Iowa State University Extension: The Health Value of Fruits and Vegetables

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