

# MyPlate: Vegetables and Fruit

Vegetables are represented in MyPlate's green section. Tomatoes, cucumbers, corn, lettuce, spinach, onions, and carrots all fall into the vegetable group. While eating vegetables is a healthy choice, get into the habit of trying a different vegetable every now and then.

Vary your veggies to get a wide variety of the different nutrients your body needs to stay healthy. Try dark green vegetables like spinach, broccoli and collard greens; orange veggies like peppers, carrots and sweet potatoes; legumes, which include black beans and split peas; starchy vegetables like corn or potatoes; and others like cauliflower, cabbage and mushrooms.

Most people should get at least 2 1/2 cups of vegetables a day. When you first start counting your serving sizes, use a measuring cup to get a better idea of how many servings you are eating each day. But some vegetables are difficult to put in a cup. Two medium carrots, three large stalks of celery or one large ear of corn are all one cup of vegetables. When you don't have measuring cups handy, use your hand. One cup of vegetables is about the size of your fist.

To get the amount recommended for you, try building meals around vegetables and adding veggie snacks to your day. Fruits are represented in the red section of MyPlate. Strawberries, kiwis, grapes, bananas, apples, oranges – fruits. Fruits can be canned, frozen, dried, or juiced.

Most healthy adults should get about 2 cups of fruit each day. One large orange or banana, one small apple, 32 grapes all count as one cup of fruit. Eating the whole fruit contains more fiber than drinking its juice. So instead of drinking a cup of fruit juice, have the whole fruit. When you choose canned or frozen fruits, pick those in their own natural juices or light syrup, instead of heavy syrup. Heavy syrup is mostly made up of sugar and water and that adds empty calories.

And just like your vegetables, focus on a variety of fruits each week. Eat from all the colors of the rainbow: yellow, green, blue, red, and orange.

Download Start Simple with MyPlate app to set daily food goals and see your progress in real-time.