

7 Tips for Getting Your RDA of Fruits and Vegetables

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If you're like most people, you probably groan at the thought of trying to eat the recommended daily servings of fruits and vegetables. With our frenzied lifestyles, it just seems easier to grab what's quick instead of healthy.

By following these fun and easy tips, however, you will soon find yourself closer to consuming the recommended five to 13 servings of healthy, vitamin-packed, fiber-rich, tasty fruits and vegetables every day.

Tip 1: Grate an apple into pancake, waffle or muffin mix before cooking. If you don't like the idea of apple chunks in your food, serve fresh apple slices as an accompaniment to your favorite breakfast food.

Tip 2: Substitute a serving of fresh or frozen raspberries, blueberries, blackberries or strawberries in your ice cream or frozen yogurt dessert. Nutrient-packed berries add color, flavor and texture. (Bet you won't even miss the hot fudge, caramel and whipped cream!)

Tip 3: Add grated or chopped vegetables such as carrots, zucchinis, peppers (green, red or yellow), mushrooms or onions to your main dish as you are preparing it.
This tip works especially well in spaghetti sauce, meatloaf, tacos, soups and stews.

Tip 4: For a quick snack, ditch the candy bars, potato chips and other vending machine fare. Instead, grab a handful of dried fruit, a cupful of berries, a bunch of grapes, some baby carrots or sliced raw vegetables. Pre-pack single servings of your favorite fruits and vegetables in small zipper lock baggies for quick snacks on-the-go. And, don't forget bananas, which are pre-wrapped by Mother Nature!

Tip 5: Eat at least one service of a green vegetable every day (preferably dark green and leafy). Some suggestions: lettuce, chard, kale, spinach, asparagus, broccoli, cucumbers and cabbage.

Tip 6: When dining out ask for an extra serving of vegetables (preferably raw or steamed). Oh, and while you're at it, leave out the fried sides!

Tip 7: Exchange the customary late afternoon caffeine fix for a glass of cold 100% vegetable or fruit juice. A healthy sidenote: Many varieties of fresh juice now contain added calcium for healthy bones.

Overwhelmed by the thought of consuming five to 13 servings of fruits and vegetables every day? Don't be. A serving isn't as much as you might think. For example:

* One serving of fresh or frozen fruit or vegetables equals 1/2 cup

* One serving of lettuce equals 1 cup

* One serving of fruit juice equals 6 ounces

Try to consume two to five servings of fruit each day and three to seven servings of vegetables. With just a little planning and effort, you'll be on your way to 12-a-day in no time at all!

Patty Harder is the founder of 5 Minute Self-Help and the author of

Less-Stressed NOW! Your Complete Guide to Managing Stress, Beating the Blues, and Waking Up Happier Every Day. To learn more, visit

<http://www.5MinuteSelfHelp.com>.

Tips For Your Body's Health

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