



Enjoy Colorful Fruits and Vegetables for Vital Vitamins

EXTENSION

April 2022

Deana Hildebrand, PhD, RD, LD
Professor & Extension Specialist

Christine Walters, MS, RDN
MS Student in Nutritional Sciences

Tori Compton
Dietetic Intern, Extension Program Assistant

Fruits and vegetables add important nutrients and fiber to your meals and snacks. They are divided into five color groups. Each color group provides different vitamins and minerals. Choose several different colors each day to get the nutrients you and your baby need. All fruits and vegetables provide fiber, which helps prevent constipation.

Vegetables and Fruits: Choose a rainbow

- Dark green vegetables: broccoli, green peppers, kale, spinach, romaine, collard, turnip, and mustard greens.
- Red and orange vegetables: tomatoes, red peppers, carrots, sweet potatoes, winter squash, and pumpkin.
- Beans and peas: kidney beans, lentils, chickpeas, black beans, and pinto beans.
- Starchy vegetables: white potatoes, corn, and green peas.
- Other vegetables: summer squash, green beans, cauliflowers, and onions.
- Fruits: oranges and orange juice, apples and apple juice, berries, melons, bananas, mangoes, peaches, grapes, and dried fruits such as apricots, prunes, and raisins.

For the best prices, shop seasonally

To get enough nutrients and fiber, try to eat at least 5 cups of fruits and vegetables each day. You can choose fresh, frozen, canned or dried. When you buy canned fruit, look for fruit packed in fruit juice or water. When you buy canned vegetables, look for the words "low sodium" on the label.

Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Fact Sheets
are also available on our website at:
extension.okstate.edu

Spring	Summer	Fall	Winter
Asparagus Spinach Leaf lettuce Strawberries	Blackberries Broccoli Chard Cantaloupe Corn Watermelon Corn Peaches Tomatoes	Brussels sprouts Cauliflower Pears Apples Oranges Sweet potatoes	Onions Parsnips Potatoes Winter Squash Cabbage Bananas Grapefruit

Tips to eat more fruits and vegetables

- Drink vegetable juice at breakfast or with a snack.
- Drink a fruit smoothie or freeze smoothie in muffin tins to make popsicles.
- Have a breakfast burrito or omelet with tomatoes, mushrooms, onions, and greens.
- Top a baked potato with broccoli.
- Carry carrots and celery sticks for snack.
- Top yogurt with fresh or canned fruits.
- Choose side salads instead of fries.

Folic Acid

Fruits and vegetables also provide folic acid. It is important to get enough folic acid before and during pregnancy. It helps protect your baby from serious birth defects of the brain and spine. It also protects your baby from cleft lip and heart defects. These types of defects happen before most women know they are pregnant.

Sources of Folic Acid

- Beans
- Peas
- Oranges and orange juice
- Dark green leafy vegetables such as mustard greens, spinach, Romaine lettuce, and kale.

Ask your doctor about taking a folic acid supplement if you are thinking about getting pregnant or as soon as you find out you are pregnant.

The Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service

WE ARE OKLAHOMA

The Cooperative Extension Service is the largest, most successful informal educational organization in the world. It is a nationwide system funded and guided by a partnership of federal, state, and local governments that delivers information to help people help themselves through the land-grant university system.

Extension carries out programs in the broad categories of agriculture, natural resources and environment; family and consumer sciences; 4-H and other youth; and community resource development. Extension staff members live and work among the people they serve to help stimulate and educate Americans to plan ahead and cope with their problems.

Some characteristics of the Cooperative Extension system are:

- The federal, state, and local governments cooperatively share in its financial support and program direction.
- It is administered by the land-grant university as designated by the state legislature through an Extension director.
- Extension programs are nonpolitical, objective, and research-based information.
- It provides practical, problem-oriented education for people of all ages. It is designated to take the knowledge of the university to those persons who do not or cannot participate in the formal classroom instruction of the university.
- It utilizes research from university, government, and other sources to help people make their own decisions.
- More than a million volunteers help multiply the impact of the Extension professional staff.
- It dispenses no funds to the public.
- It is not a regulatory agency, but it does inform people of regulations and of their options in meeting them.
- Local programs are developed and carried out in full recognition of national problems and goals.
- The Extension staff educates people through personal contacts, meetings, demonstrations, and the mass media.
- Extension has the built-in flexibility to adjust its programs and subject matter to meet new needs. Activities shift from year to year as citizen groups and Extension workers close to the problems advise changes.

References

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. The Best Foods to Eat During Pregnancy. October 2018. Available at <https://www.eatright.org/health/pregnancy/what-to-eat-when-expecting/the-best-foods-to-eat-during-pregnancy>. Accessed June 2021.

US Department of Agriculture. July 2019. Available at MyPlate | U.S. Department of Agriculture. Accessed June 2021.

US Department of Agriculture. Nutritional Needs During Pregnancy. April 2018. Available at Pregnancy | MyPlate. Accessed June 2021.

United States Department of Agriculture. (2020, December). Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2020-2025. Dietary Guidelines for Americans. <https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov/>. Accessed June 2021.

Oklahoma State University, as an equal opportunity employer, complies with all applicable federal and state laws regarding non-discrimination and affirmative action. Oklahoma State University is committed to a policy of equal opportunity for all individuals and does not discriminate based on race, religion, age, sex, color, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity/expression, disability, or veteran status with regard to employment, educational programs and activities, and/or admissions. For more information, visit <https://eeo.okstate.edu>.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, Director of Oklahoma Cooperative Extension Service, Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma. This publication is printed and issued by Oklahoma State University as authorized by the Vice President for Agricultural Programs and has been prepared and distributed at a cost of 40 cents per copy. 04/2022 KG.