



Why More Fruits and Vegetables?

1. **Fiber:** Fruits and vegetables provide fiber, which fills you up and keeps your digestive system healthy.
2. **Energy:** Fruits and vegetables are naturally lower in calories, which contribute to a healthy weight.
3. **Vitamins and Minerals:** Fruits and vegetables are rich in vitamins and minerals.
4. **Disease:** Eating more fruits and vegetables may help reduce the risk of many diseases, including heart disease, high blood pressure, and some cancers.

Also, we often tend to replace Fruits and Vegetables with other less healthful foods, like cookies and chips. These foods contribute more fat, sugar, and sodium, nutrients that we should be eating less of.

<u>What You Get for \$1 to \$2</u>	<u>Nutrition Value for Your \$\$</u>
5 oz. bag chips	Energy from fat, salt
16 oz. bag baby carrots	Energy, vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants
1 large cookie	Energy from fat and sugar
1 lb bag of apples	Energy, vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants
12 oz. 100% orange juice	Energy, vitamins, minerals, antioxidants
20 oz. bottle of soda	Energy from sugar
5 medium bananas	Energy, vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants
<i>*Prices are approximate and will vary depending on location, sales, coupons, etc.</i>	

Common Problems and Solutions to Increasing Your Intake:

1. Problem: Fruits and vegetables cost too much

Possible Solutions:

- Buy fresh fruits and vegetables in season. Not only will they be cheaper but they will also be at their flavor and nutritional peaks.
- Watch local grocery advertisements for reduced prices on your favorite fruits and vegetables. Buy extra when there are specials on fruits and vegetables; they can be frozen, or you can prepare a dish and then freeze it for a night when you are short on time. Only buy it if you know you will use it though; you don't want to have to throw it away.
- If you're not partial to a particular brand, compare prices of different canned and frozen fruits and vegetables and buy the cheapest. Compare the cost of various fresh fruits and vegetables and select cheaper options, as long as you still like them and will eat them.
- Clip coupons for money off on your favorite canned and frozen fruits and vegetables and juices.

2. Problem: Fruits and vegetables take too long to prepare

Possible Solutions:

- Take advantage of grocery store salad bars, which offer ready-to-eat raw vegetables and fruits and prepared salads made with fruits and vegetables.
- Ask for extra veggies on your sandwich, burritos, stir-fry, pasta, etc.
- Keep canned and frozen fruit, canned and bottled juices, and dried fruits on hand; just open and use.
- Stock up on frozen vegetables for easy cooking, you can even use a microwave oven.
- Prepare fruits and vegetables ahead of time; for example, wash and, if feasible, cut up fresh produce and store it in the refrigerator for handy, immediate use. Note, fruits and vegetables have natural coatings that keep moisture inside and after washing, they may spoil quicker.
- Select precut fruits and vegetables at the grocery store.

3. Problem: Fresh fruits and vegetables spoil too quickly

Possible Solutions:

- If you shop once a week or less often, buy both fresh and processed--that is, canned or frozen--fruits and vegetables, and juices. Use the fresh items first before they spoil and save the processed items for later.
- Buy both ripe and not-so-ripe fresh fruits and vegetables--for example, yellow and green bananas--so that the not-so-ripe items will last a few days longer and be ready for eating after you've finished the ripe ones.
- Keep fruits and vegetables where you can see them often--on the top shelf of the refrigerator, or, for fruits that don't need refrigeration (like bananas), on the table or counter or another easy-to-spot-place. The more often you see fruits and vegetables, the more likely you will be to eat them.
- Consider dried and frozen fruits and frozen vegetables.

4. Problem: Fruits and vegetables contain harmful pesticides

It is a fact that pesticides are used in the production of most fruits and vegetables sold in this country. They help protect crops from insects, diseases, weeds, and mold, thus helping to increase crop yield. "They allow for production of a plentiful and affordable food supply," said John Jones, Ph.D., in FDA's Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition.

FDA's position is that the U.S. fruit and vegetable supply does not contain excessive pesticide residues and that the benefits of eating fresh produce far exceeds any risk from residues.

However, if you're still concerned, here are some steps you can take to reduce your pesticide intake:

- Wash fruits and vegetables with water and scrub with a brush when appropriate: for example, before eating apples, cucumbers, potatoes, or other produce in which the outer skin or peel is eaten.
- Throw away the outer leaves of leafy vegetables, such as lettuce and cabbage.
- Peel when appropriate, although some nutrients and fiber may be lost when produce is peeled.