

January



5 A Day: A New Beginning for Better Health Nutrition Fact Sheet

Each January brings a sense of excitement and renewed commitment for the year ahead. Often we vow to change our current habits so that we can be healthier. Yet, many times we face obstacles that make those changes difficult to maintain over time. By making a vow to eat 5 a day, we take the first step on a path to better health. Eating more fruits and vegetables, specifically a total of 5 servings of fruits and/or vegetables each day, isn't easy. However, we know it can lead, not only to better health, but to a lower risk of getting certain types of cancers as well. This year begin to make a change that tastes good and is good for you! Enjoy 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day! It can be a new beginning for better health!

☐ Why is it so difficult for me to change my unhealthy habits to healthy ones, like eating 5 a day?

Our habits are learned over a lifetime, that is why we find them so difficult to change. Even with all the information that tells us we should be eating 5 a day to lower our cancer risk, it can be hard to make the change. Some of us ate many fruits and vegetables as children because people grew and cooked more of their own foods. Fruits and vegetables were fresh and plentiful, yet often the foods were prepared in ways that we now know are not healthy for us. Begin to make the change by starting where you are, whether it be eating no fruits and vegetables each day or four servings. Take each day one at a time and pray for the strength to change those things that you know are not good for you. If you are a parent, start your children out on the right track while they are young. For yourself, remember change takes time and dedication, but with God on your side, all things are possible.

☐ Are there some easy steps I can take to get reach my 5 a day goal?

- ① **Be prepared** by making sure you have fruits and vegetables around the house.
- ② **Make it easy on yourself.** Eating 5 a day doesn't have to involve elaborate recipes and lots of time in the kitchen. It can be as simple as choosing 100% fruit juice instead of soda or picking up a bunch of bananas during your weekly shopping.
- ③ **Try these simple ideas** to meet your 5 a day goal.
 - Cut up a banana in your cereal.
 - Have a glass of juice as your mid-morning snack.
 - Pack a juice box in your lunch, along with a piece of fruit.
 - Keep boxes of raisins in your desk, purse, or car.
 - Microwave some frozen vegetables for dinner.
- ④ **ENJOY!** Getting to 5 can be a challenge, but the benefits can mean a lot for you and your family.

❑ Why are fruits and vegetables so good for us?

Fruits and vegetables are loaded with nutrients and each day researchers are learning more about why fruits and vegetables are so good for us. Fruits can contain Vitamin C, fiber, and many other substances that are important cancer-fighters. Vegetables such as collards and turnip greens provide Vitamin A, Vitamin C, and fiber. The deep orange vegetables such as sweet potatoes, carrots, and squash include these nutrients as well. More and more, eating fruits and vegetables is being viewed critical to our good health. Getting your 5 a day every day is one goal that can lead to a lifetime of good health.

❑ How can I get more flavor in the fruits and vegetables I cook?

Herbs, spices and other flavorings such as onion and garlic can add lots of flavor to your fruits and vegetables. It can be exciting to experiment with a few you may not have tried before. Although spices can be expensive, remember you don't need much so they usually last a while. Another alternative is to grow your own herbs. This can be a convenient and economical way to have fresh herbs to use in cooking. When using herbs and spices, start out with a very small amount because too much can quickly overpower the food. Keep trying until you find the combinations that suit your taste. To begin, choose one herb, spice, or flavoring **from the list below and create** your own combinations as you become more familiar with their taste.

Fruit

Apples
Peaches
Melons
Citrus Fruits

Herb, Spice or Flavoring

Cinnamon, nutmeg, allspice
Cinnamon, nutmeg
Mint, orange juice
Mint

Vegetable

Carrots
Sweet potatoes
Greens
Green Beans

Cabbage
Cucumbers
Tomatoes
Broccoli
Potatoes
Brussel sprouts
Spinach

Herb, Spice or Flavoring

Cinnamon, cloves, nutmeg, rosemary, sage, mint
Cinnamon, nutmeg, ginger
Onion, crushed red pepper, garlic, black pepper
Oregano, garlic, onion powder, dill, thyme, curry powder
Celery seed, garlic, onion, black pepper
Dill, mint
Basil, oregano, garlic
Garlic, oregano, black pepper
Onion, garlic, parsley, sage, paprika, dill
Garlic, oregano
Garlic, onion, black pepper