



5 A DAY: Fruit and Vegetables

Eating more fruit and vegetables could significantly reduce the risk of many conditions and diseases, such as high blood pressure, obesity, cardiovascular disease and some cancers.

Benefits of eating your 5 A DAY

Fruit and vegetables are generally **low fat** and **low calorie** foods, but they will still fill you up because of their high fibre content without adding unwanted calories/energy.

Fruit and vegetables are also beneficial because they naturally contain lots of vitamins and minerals, for example iron, which helps our bodies to make red blood cells to carry oxygen. It is important to eat a wide variety of fruit and vegetables, as many different colours as you can, as each one has a slightly different mineral and vitamin combination.

What counts?

Fresh, frozen, canned, juiced or dried fruits and vegetables all count towards your 5 A DAY in your daily diet.

Potatoes and similar starchy foods, such as yam, sweet potatoe and plantain are carbohydrate foods and cannot be counted as a portion of vegetables.

Portion Sizes

As a rough guide, **one portion** is the same as **one handful** of any kind of vegetable, salad or fruit. You may however find it useful to use the following information:



Portion Size Table

Vegetables

E.g. Carrots, cabbage, peas, leeks, cauliflower, broccoli, peppers, mushrooms, courgettes, sweetcorn

1 Portion

3 heaped tablespoons

Salad

E.g. a mixed bowl of salad of lettuce, peppers, cucumber, onion, tomatoes, sweetcorn

1 small bowl

Tomatoes

1 medium

Fruits

Fresh whole fruits

1 apple, 1 pear, 1 orange, ½ or small banana, 2 nectarines

Small fruits

12 grapes, 3 apricots, 2 plums, 2 kiwi fruit, 7 strawberries

Large fruits

1 slice melon or pineapple, ½ grapefruit

Stewed fruit, eg apples, rhubarb, plums

4 large tablespoons

Dried fruit, eg raisins, sultanas, dates

1 matchbox size box

Tinned fruit in natural juice, eg peaches, pears, pineapple

3 large tablespoons

Fruit juice (maximum one per day)

1 small glass or small carton



Cooking Tips

To keep more vitamins in the food try to cook vegetable by steam or stir-fry.

Don't prepare them too far ahead of cooking. If, occasionally, you do have to prepare ahead, put them in a plastic bag, remove as much air as possible and store in the fridge.

Don't store prepared veg in a pan of water or the vitamins will leach out into the water.

Dishes that contain several different fruits or vegetables, e.g., vegetable soups, ready-meals, pasta sauces, puddings and takeaway meals, can contribute to your 5 A DAY, but remember, many of these foods are high in added fat, sugar and salt, so check the nutrition information on the label. It is unlikely that a ready-meal will contain more than a single portion of vegetables. In order to increase your vegetable intake, cook some fresh, canned or frozen vegetables to accompany the ready-meal.

Why not try using the *readytoloseweight* free food diary to see how close you come to eating 5 fruit and vegetables a day?