

Encourage Kids to Eat More Fruits & Veggies

Eating fruits and vegetables is part of a healthy diet* for both children and adults. Finding creative ways to encourage fruits and vegetables in your child's diet can be fun for the entire family.

There are more fruits and vegetables available in fresh, frozen, canned, and dried forms than ever before. Taking the time to introduce a variety of fruits and vegetables to kids can help develop a lifetime of healthy habits.



10 Ways to Help Kids Eat More Fruits & Veggies

1. Keep a bowl of fresh fruits on the counter. Refrigerate cut up fruits and vegetables in small bags for easy snacks on the run.
2. Serve fruits and vegetables at every meal. Add grated or cut vegetables into entrees, side dishes, and soups. Top off cereal with fruits or add frozen fruits to smoothies.
3. Set a good example. Snack on fruit and order low-sodium, lowfat salads, soups, or vegetable sides when at restaurants.
4. Pack the refrigerator, freezer and cupboard with pre-cut, frozen and canned vegetables so that it is easier for you to prepare meals and snacks that include vegetables.
5. Challenge family members to reach their daily fruits and vegetables goal. Reward the winner with a prize of his or her choice.
6. Ask that fruits and vegetables be offered at school functions, after school programs, and in vending machines.
7. Let children choose which fruits and vegetables to serve and how to incorporate them into their favorite meals.
8. Make fruits and vegetables fun. Try dressing up sandwiches with faces and smiles made from fruits and vegetables.
9. Keep trying. For some foods, it may take multiple times before a child acquires a taste for it.
10. Encourage friends or relatives to offer vegetables and fruits to your children.



Important Elements—Smell, Texture, and Color

- Kids are turned off to trying new foods if the smell, flavor, or color is not appealing to them. It may be more appealing to a child if the fruits or vegetables are served raw.
- Try feeding different textures of fruits and vegetables to your child. Some children prefer smooth food, where as others like lumpy, and some children like crisp foods, but others like soft.
- Offer new fruits and vegetables in combination with old favorites to show your child a variety of smells, textures, and colors. Various vegetables can be added to any whole grain pasta dish or pizza, and fruit is a great topping for lowfat or fat-free yogurt.

*In addition to fruits and vegetables, a healthy diet also includes whole grains, fat-free or lowfat milk products, lean meats, fish, beans, eggs and nuts, and is low in saturated fats, *trans* fats, cholesterol, salt, and added sugars. A healthy diet also means staying within your daily calorie needs.

