

Zero Weight Gain

HOLIDAY CHALLENGE



November 29 / Issue 4

Sneaking More Fruits and Vegetables into Your Diet

Fruits and Vegetables are Key to Weight Control

It can be difficult to eat right during the holidays. With all of the delectable treats who can resist? Eating enough fruits and vegetables can be especially challenging, and most Americans don't even get close to the recommended amounts. The average person consuming 2,000 calorie per day needs a total of 2 cups of fruit and 2 ½ cups of vegetables every day. Adding more fruits and vegetables doesn't have to be hard. Here are five easy ways to up your daily fruit and vegetable intake:

1) **Liven up your breakfast.** For breakfast, there are many ways to add more fruit and vegetables.

- Smoothies are an easy way to get in a whole cup of fruit without even trying. Whip up a smoothie with 1 cup of frozen mixed berries, ½ cup of non-fat milk or yogurt, and a few ice cubes-and you are good to go!
- If you eat oatmeal, change things up by adding a diced apple, a sprinkle of cinnamon and a packet of no-calorie sweetener. It will taste like apple pie in a bowl.
- Drinking a 4 oz. glass serving of 100% fruit juice will give you half a serving of fruit. Just be sure to watch your portion size. Many people drink much



Get as much variety in fruits and vegetables as you can. Choose deep and bright colors for more nutrition.

more than the recommended amount - leading to a lot of extra calories.

- Add vegetables like bell peppers, mushrooms, onions, and spinach to an egg white omelet OR
 - Put a half cup of frozen mixed vegetables in a small microwavable dish sprayed with non-stick spray. Whip in two eggs. Cover and microwave on HIGH for 2-3 minutes or until eggs are set.
- 2) **Dip 'em:** Tired of snacking on plain old carrots, celery, and broccoli? Dip them in hummus, low calorie salad dressing, or even plain Greek yogurt

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with added spices and herbs like cayenne pepper or dill. This will make a snack that



was once boring and bland much more appetizing. Also, dip your sliced apples, pears and bananas in a

tablespoon of peanut butter for some extra flavor.

3) **Sneak Them into Sauces:** Stir in vegetables such as grated carrot and zucchini or chopped spinach, kale, or bell pepper into pasta sauces or canned soups as they heat to get an extra serving of veggies. Also sneak grated carrots, zucchini, or yellow squash into meat loaf and burgers. Not only does this make your meal more nutritious, but the meat stays moist and tender, too!

4) **Make Healthy Snacking Easy:** Instead of running to the pantry for chips or crackers when hunger hits, snack on pre-cut fruits and vegetables. Store cut-up fruits and veggies such as melon, apples, raw turnips, celery, carrots, or bell peppers in snack-size zip-lock bags in your fridge for easy access. When you are running errands around town, take a baggie full of fruits or veggies with you instead of going through the fast food drive through. For work or school, cut-up and package some fruit and vegetables the night before so you can take along a convenient and healthy snack the next day.



5) **Make Fruit a Yummy Dessert:** If you crave something sweet, don't head straight for the ice cream and cookies. Instead, make a delicious fruit dessert that will still satisfy your sweet tooth, but will be much more forgiving to your waistline. Here are some ideas for tasty dessert options you can make in no time:

- Dip strawberries or cherries in a small amount of melted dark chocolate
- Microwave frozen berries, sweeten with sugar substitute and eat over angel food cake
- Make a fruit parfait with Greek yogurt and any combination of fruit such as berries or diced peaches, pineapple, mango, or kiwi. Alternate layers of fruit and yogurt and top with a sprinkle of low-fat granola.

So think twice before you eat. It just takes a little effort to eat more vegetables and fruits and dramatically reduce your calorie intake. If you choose to eat more nutritiously most of the time, you won't feel so bad when you splurge a little at that next holiday party.



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See this week's recipe on next page



Harvest of Quinoa Soup

Quinoa (keen-wa) is a seed used like a grain. If its package does not say it is pre-soaked and rinsed, soak it for 15 minutes in water and then drain through a coffee filter or cheesecloth in a colander. This removes a bitter flavor. Quinoa can be substituted in most recipes for rice, couscous or pasta. Prepare this soup the day before to enhance the flavors.



1 tablespoon olive oil	1 quart reduced or low sodium beef broth
¼ cup pre-soaked and rinsed quinoa	½ cup canned diced low sodium tomatoes
½ cup carrot, diced	½ cup cabbage, chopped
¼ cup celery, diced	1 teaspoon Mrs. DASH (any flavor)
2 tablespoons sweet onion, chopped	¼ teaspoon white or black pepper
¼ cup red or yellow bell pepper, diced	Dash of hot sauce if desired
2 cloves garlic, minced	

- 1) Heat non-stick Dutch oven over moderately high heat. When hot, add the oil.
- 2) Sauté the quinoa, carrot, celery, onion, bell pepper and garlic in oil until golden brown.
- 3) Add broth, tomatoes and cabbage and bring to a boil. Simmer 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender.
- 4) Add the seasonings.

4 servings

Nutritional Analysis with low sodium broth:

Calories: 101	Carbohydrate: 12 grams	Protein: 4 grams
Fat: 4 grams	Saturated fat: 0.5 grams	Cholesterol: 0 milligrams
Sodium: 104 milligrams		Dietary Fiber: 2 grams