

# Paint your Plate with Fruits and Vegetables



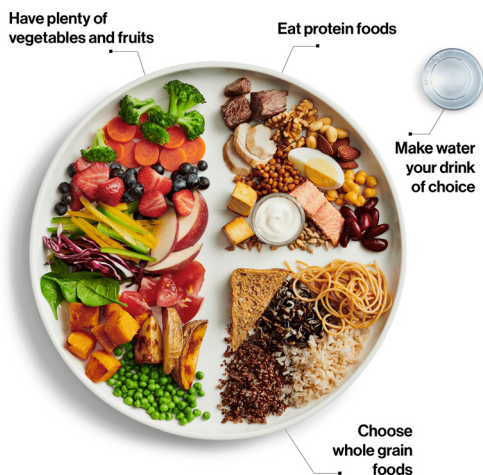
An initiative of Human Resources in partnership  
with the Workplace Wellness Committee

## Week 2: Paint your Plate with Fruits and Vegetables

Vegetables and fruits have important nutrients such as fibre, vitamins and minerals. A diet rich in vegetables and fruits can help you:

- Keep the digestive system healthy and reduce the absorption of carcinogens by lining the colon.
- Reach and maintain a healthy weight.
- Protect against certain cancers and other diseases.
- Feel energized throughout your day.
- Prevent cataracts and macular degeneration.
- Reduce high blood pressure and maintain it at a healthy level.

This week's challenge is to increase your fruit and vegetable intake.



Picture Source: <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/>

### HOW MANY FRUITS AND VEGETABLES SHOULD I CONSUME EACH DAY?

Canada's Food Guide recommends including plenty of vegetables and fruits in your meals and snacks. The guidelines stipulate that vegetables and fruits should take up half of your dinner plate, and that you should choose whole or cut vegetables and fruits instead of juice. It is recommended that you vary your fruit and vegetable choices as they differ in nutrient content.

### QUICK TIPS FOR INCREASING YOUR FRUIT AND VEGETABLE INTAKE

- Vegetables and fruits come in many forms such as fresh, frozen and canned. Buy a variety so that you always have a supply on hand.
- Keep a bowl of whole fruit on the table, countertop or in the refrigerator so that you can easily get one when you are hungry.
- Slice vegetables/fruits as soon as you purchase them for a quick snack.
- Buy packaged ready-to-eat vegetables and fruits to cut down on meal preparation time or when on the go.
- Look for opportunities to add more fruits and vegetables to your favourite meals.

| Meal      | Examples of ways to add more fruits and vegetables to your meals  |
|-----------|---|
| Breakfast | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Top your cereal with bananas or peaches.</li><li>• Add blueberries to pancakes.</li><li>• Drink 100% orange or grapefruit juice.</li><li>• Mix fresh fruit with plain fat-free or low-fat yogurt.</li><li>• Make fruit smoothies by blending different types of fruit with yogurt and 100% fruit juice.</li></ul> |

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| Meal   | Examples of ways to add more fruits and vegetables to your meals  |
|--------|---|
| Lunch  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add a variety of vegetables to your sandwich such as cucumbers, tomatoes, lettuce or avocado.</li> <li>• Have a piece of fruit or raw vegetable sticks as a side instead of chips.</li> <li>• Eat a bowl of vegetable soup (compare nutrition facts and select the product with the lowest amount of sodium, or better yet, make the soup from scratch).</li> </ul>                                      |
| Dinner | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Add colourful vegetables such as red cabbage, carrots, and peppers to green salads.</li> <li>• Top salads with dried cranberries or other dried berries or fruits.</li> <li>• Add a side of steamed, boiled or grilled vegetables to your main dish.</li> <li>• Add chopped vegetables like onions, garlic and celery when cooking soup, stew, beans, rice, spaghetti sauce and other sauces.</li> </ul> |

## SELECTING AND PREPARING HEALTHY FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Frozen fruits and vegetables are also a healthy option. Make sure that they do not contain added sugars, seasoning, breading or sauces.
- When buying canned vegetables, select those with little to no added sodium and rinse them to lower the sodium content. Use the nutrition facts table to help you find healthier options.
- When buying canned fruit or dried fruit, select those with little to no added sugars. Use the nutrition facts table to help you find healthier options.
- When preparing vegetables, try healthier cooking methods such as baking, roasting, steaming and stir-frying. To enhance flavor, add olive oil, lemon juice, flavoured vinegar and fresh or dried herbs and spices.

## HEALTHY RECIPE

The links below connect you to healthy recipes containing vegetables and fruits:

<https://www.foodnetwork.com/recipes/alton-brown/garden-vegetable-soup-recipe-1915670>

<http://www.eatingwell.com/recipe/268777/healthy-blueberry-muffins/>

## DID YOU KNOW...?

Paint your plate everyday with colourful fruits and vegetables for better health.

The colour of fruits and vegetables is caused by phytochemicals. The darker the colour of the fruit and vegetable, the more phytochemicals it has. If you are only eating one colour of fruits and vegetables, you are missing important nutrients and phytochemicals.

**Following healthy eating practices can help you reach and maintain a healthy weight and lower the risk of developing many chronic diseases such as obesity, type 2 diabetes and heart disease. Next week's Healthy Eating, Healthy Life Workplace Challenge is "Rethink Your Drink".**

**For more information about the challenge and to download the challenge tracking sheet go to [www.uwindsor.ca/healthyeating](http://www.uwindsor.ca/healthyeating)**