



# Tip of the Week

## Improve your Meals with Fruits and Vegetables

*Adapted from Choosemyplate.gov*

Discover the many benefits of adding vegetables and fruits to your meals. They are low in fat and calories, while providing fiber and other key nutrients. Most Americans should eat more than 3 cups—and for some, up to 6 cups—of vegetables and fruits each day. Vegetables and fruits don't just add nutrition to meals. They can also add color, flavor, and texture. Explore these creative ways to bring healthy foods to your table.

### Fire up the grill

Use the grill to cook vegetables and fruits. Try grilling mushrooms, carrots, peppers, or potatoes on a kabob skewer. Brush with oil to keep them from drying out. Grilled fruits like peaches, pineapple, or mangos add great flavor to a cookout.



### Expand the flavor of your casseroles

Mix vegetables such as sautéed onions, peas, pinto beans, or tomatoes into your favorite dish for that extra flavor.

### Planning something Italian?

Add extra vegetables to your pasta dish. Slip some peppers, spinach, red beans, onions, or cherry tomatoes into your traditional tomato sauce. Vegetables provide texture and low-calorie bulk that satisfies.

### Get creative with your salad

Toss in shredded carrots, strawberries, spinach, watercress, orange segments, or sweet peas for a flavorful, fun salad.

### Salad bars aren't just for salads

Try eating sliced fruit from the salad bar as your dessert when dining out. This will help you avoid any baked desserts that are high in calories.

### Get in on the stir-frying fun

Try something new! Stir-fry your veggies—like broccoli, carrots, sugar snap peas, mushrooms, or green beans—for a quick-and-easy addition to any meal.

### Add them to your sandwiches

Whether it is a sandwich or wrap, vegetables make great additions to both. Try sliced tomatoes, romaine lettuce, or avocado on your everyday sandwich or wrap for extra flavor.

### Be creative with your baked goods

Add apples, bananas, blueberries, or pears to your favorite muffin recipe for a treat.





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### Make a tasty fruit smoothie

For dessert, blend strawberries, blueberries, or raspberries with frozen bananas and 100% fruit juice, yogurt, or milk for a delicious frozen fruit smoothie. Don't be shy and add a handful of kale or spinach for an extra vitamin kick.

### Liven up an omelet

Boost the color and flavor of your morning omelet with vegetables. Simply chop, sauté, and add them to the egg as it cooks. Try combining different vegetables, such as mushrooms, spinach, onions, or bell peppers.

### What Counts as a Cup?

			
1 small apple	1 large banana	1 medium grapefruit	1 large orange
			
1 medium pear	1 small wedge of watermelon	2 large or 3 medium plums	8 large strawberries
			
1 medium potato	1 large bell pepper	1 cup cooked greens or 2 cups raw (spinach, collards, mustard greens, kale)	12 baby carrots (or 2 medium carrots)
			
1 large sweet potato	1 large ear of corn	5 broccoli florets	16 grapes

