

Brazos County Family & Consumer Science Spotlight

Texas AgriLife
Extension

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Hello Fresh Fruits and Veggies!

With Spring here and Summer rapidly approaching, this is the best time of year to amp up your fruit and vegetable consumption. The 2010 Dietary Guidelines recommend that adults eat 2.5 to 3 cups per day of vegetables and 1.5 to 2 cups of fruits.

If you are thinking, "I am nowhere close to getting almost 5 cups of fruits and veggies everyday!" Don't panic, during this time of year fresh produce is at your fingertips. Most of our favorite produce is now in season, so there tends to be a large

selection with great prices. This makes it a great time to try new vegetables or fruits and add a few extra fresh side dishes to your dinner routine.

One of the easiest ways to increase your vegetable consumption, is to make one night per week a "Salad Special" night. Experiment with different themes, dressings, nuts, chesses, and meats. Taco salad night is always a big hit at my house and we tend to use leftovers to clean out the fridge which helps

stretch our food dollar a little further.

For dessert, try a fruit salad! Cutting up a few strawberries, watermelon, cantaloupe, pears, apples and adding a few grapes is a great way to get in several color groups with a lot of flavor. Try sprinkling a no sugar added gelatin packet in a lime or strawberry, refrigerate for a few hours and serve cold. This adds a little sweet kick with very few extra calories!

Enjoy!

Better Living for Texans Healthy Option

Ingredients:

- 3 cups uncooked medium pasta shells
- 2 medium carrots, sliced
- 1 medium green bell pepper, chopped
- 15-ounce can kidney beans, drained and rinsed
- 15-ounce can garbanzo beans, drained and rinsed
- 14 ½ -ounce can Italian style stewed tomatoes
- 2/3 cups Italian dressing

- 1/2 cup Parmesan cheese, grated

What to do:

- Wash your hands and clean your cooking area.
- Cook pasta according to package directions.
- Drain and rinse pasta, set aside to cool.
- In a large bowl, mix washed carrots, bell pepper, kidney beans, garbanzo beans, and tomatoes.

- Add cooked pasta to vegetable mixture.
- Mix ingredients with Italian dressing and Parmesan cheese.
- Refrigerate before serving.

Prep Time: 15 minutes

Servings: 10

Serving Size: 1 cup

Cost per serving: \$0.55

Nutrition Information

Calories: 200
Total Fat: 2 g
Saturated Fat: 1 g
Cholesterol: 5 mg
Sodium: 330 mg
Dietary Fiber: 7 g
Protein: 10 g

My Pyramid Equivalents:

1/3 cup Vegetables
1 1/2 ounce Meat and Beans
1 ounce Grains

Healthy Shopping Guide

Fruits and Vegetables

Quick Tip: When buying produce, try buying 5 different colors. So, if you like green apples, buy purple or red grapes.

Red	Tomato, radish, strawberries, apples, grapes, bell peppers
Orange	Sweet potatoes, carrots, mango, bell peppers, cantaloupe, peaches, oranges
Yellow	Banana, corn, squash,
Green	Dark leafy greens, broccoli, cabbage, avocado, honeydew, kiwi
Blue/Purple	Blueberries, plums, purple grapes, eggplant

Meat/Poultry/Fish

Tip: Cook a couple extra chicken breasts or steaks and use them on salads or in other dishes throughout the week for quick meal preparation.

Beef	Extra lean 97/3, brisket, well trimmed steaks with little fat in the meat
Pork	Pork tenderloin, center loin chop, Canadian bacon
Turkey	White meat ground 93/7, turkey breast cutlets, turkey bacon, marinated turkey breast tenderloin
Chicken	Skinless breasts and tenderloins, grilled chicken strips, precooked diced chicken breasts (for salad topping)
Lunch Meat	Roast beef, oven roasted or honey roasted ham, chicken or turkey
Fish	Fresh Fish (salmon, white fish)

Milk and Dairy

Tip: Switching to Skim Milk or 1% will provide the same amount of calcium with less calories. Also look for low fat cheeses, they taste great!

Milk	Skim is best, 1% and 2% are the next best for persons over 2 years of age
Cheese	2% string cheese, 2% mozzarella, swiss or cheddar; avoid processed cheeses
Cottage Cheese	Look for low fat varieties, great on baked potatoes; great source of protein
Cream Cheese	Chose light varieties and use sparingly
Yogurt	Look for Equal or Splenda sweetened, make sure to compare labels for low fat, low calorie with high protein

Snack Foods

Tip: If you can't limit your portions of snack foods, buy individually packaged products or do not buy them at all

Pretzels	Low calorie alternative to chips, but watch the sodium
Chips	Sun Chips, Baked Chips, fat free Pringles, low fat or light chips
Popcorn	Smart pop, 98%fat free, little to no butter
Nuts	All are good, great on-the-go snack because they are very portable
Snack Mix	Try making your own mix, this way you get only what you want and can monitor the amount of each ingredient
Crackers	Multi-grain or reduced fat
Sweet Snacks	Graham crackers are a good way to satisfy a sweet tooth

Breads and Grains

Tip: Look for labels that say 100% whole wheat or cracked wheat when purchasing breads, bagels, tortillas, buns and pastas.

Fiber	Look for 3+ grams per slice
Bagels	100% Whole wheat or wheat English muffins
Tortillas	100% Whole wheat or corn
Pasta	Whole wheat varieties
Rice	Brown and long grain rice

Condiments

Tip: Use these items sparingly. Start by slightly decreasing the amount used until you can no longer tell a difference in consuming less.

Salad dressing	Look for vinaigrettes, Italians and other oil based dressings; avoid creamy or milk based.
Canola oil, first choice for cooking	Can also use canola cooking sprays
Olive oil	Look for "first cold press" or "expeller press" for best quality
Butter	Try olive oil blends or butter with canola oil

Drinks

Tip: It is important to eat fruit rather than drink fruit juices. However, if you are going to drink juice, pick 100% juice and stay away from juice cocktails. "Cocktail" juices have increased sugars and calories. Also, if you are trying to lose weight or maintain weight loss, cut out all sugar drinks, sports drinks and juices included.

Sports Drinks	Gatorade, Powerade, V8 Splash—light or low calorie varieties available
Juices	100% Juice