

Food Safety and Nutrition Newsletter

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WHAT COLOR IS YOUR DIET?

Popeye, once a popular cartoon character, ate spinach when he needed extra energy and strength. He was on the right track, because this nutritious, dark green, leafy vegetable is actually high in three of the major antioxidants: vitamin C, vitamin E, and beta carotene. We all know we should eat our fruits and vegetables, but not all fruits and vegetables are created equal in terms of nutrition. Eat the most colorful fruits and vegetables, because generally color is a clue that they are good antioxidant sources. Choose red, orange, deep-yellow, purple and some dark-green leafy vegetables every day. Two of the most widely eaten vegetables in the United States are iceberg lettuce and white potatoes, usually in the form of French fries. They do not compare nutritionally to red berries, orange carrots, or green broccoli. Therefore, we shouldn't just be eating our fruits and vegetables. We should be eating the most colorful fruits and vegetables.



Color groups of foods may help the body in the following ways.

Blue/purple: lower risk of some cancers; urinary tract health; memory function; and healthy aging.

Green: lower risk of some cancers; vision health; and strong bones and teeth.

Yellow/orange: lower risk of some cancers; a healthy heart; vision health; and a healthy immune system.

Red: lower risk of some cancers; a healthy heart; memory health; and urinary tract health.

Try adding one or two new colorful fruits and vegetables to your meals every week. For example, add grated carrots to muffins, diced fruit to pancake batter, and serve black bean dip with whole wheat crackers or tortilla chips. Colorful vegetables and fruits will enhance the visual appeal of your meals and increase the nutritional value of your diet.

FAMILY & CONSUMER SCIENCES

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Chicken And Fruit Salad

- 4 cups chicken, cooked and chopped
- 1 ½ cup apples, unpeeled and chopped
- 1 cup grapes, halved
- 1 cup celery, chopped
- ½ cup pecans, chopped (optional)
- ¾ cup fat free lemon yogurt
- ¼ teaspoon salt

1. Cook and chop chicken. Cool.
2. Combine all prepared ingredients. Toss until evenly mixed.
3. Cover and chill until ready to serve.



13 FUN WAYS TO EAT MORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES!

When you look at your lunch and dinner meals, do you see an amount of fruits and veggies equal to about half your plate? Did you have a fruit or veggie for breakfast? And maybe include one as part of a snack? Most of us know we should eat more fruits and veggies; most of us don't eat enough. Here are 13 fun ways to eat more fruits and vegetables!

Stir chopped vegetables and/or fruit into cold rice and mix with salad dressing for a super side dish.

Give your morning oatmeal a quick hit of fruit by tossing in some frozen blueberries or raspberries directly from the package.

Make a quick parfait by layering yogurt, low-fat granola and fruit in whatever proportions you'd like.



Make a dip by mixing 1/4 cup peanut butter, 2 tablespoons orange juice and 1/2 cup low fat vanilla yogurt. Serve with fresh fruit or veggies,

Add veggies (such as cucumbers, lettuce, tomatoes, peppers, mashed avocado, onion, etc.) to a cheese or meat sandwich.



Serve strips of lean meat as part of a main dish salad loaded with veggies and/or fruit.



Toss extra frozen veggies into the pot when making canned soups. When possible, choose soups with less sodium.

Rather than making a tuna salad sandwich, serve a scoop of tuna salad atop tomato slices.



Add extra veggies such as thawed frozen peas and/or thinly sliced carrot coins to your potato salad.

Mix some veggies with your pasta for added pizzazz!

Freeze 100% fruit juice (orange, apple, pineapple and grape) in popsicle molds.

Instead of a big dish of ice cream TOPPED by fruit, enjoy a bowl of fruit capped with a small scoop of ice cream.

Blend a cup of small pieces of frozen fruit, 3/4 cup of juice and a half cup of vanilla or other flavored yogurt for a quick smoothie.

“Compared with people who consume a diet with only small amounts of fruits and vegetables, those who eat more generous amounts as part of a healthful diet are likely to have reduced risk of chronic diseases, including stroke and perhaps other cardiovascular diseases and certain cancers,” according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (NOTE: If you'd like to calculate the specific fruit and vegetable recommendation for your age, sex and activity level, go to www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov)

CANNING VEGETABLES & FRUITS: COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Is it safe to can vegetables and fruits without salt? Yes, salt is used for flavor only and not to prevent spoilage.

Is it safe to can fruit without sugar? Yes, sugar is added to improve flavor, help stabilize color and retain the shape of the fruit. It is not added as a preservative.



Can fruits and vegetables be canned without heating if aspirin is used? No. Aspirin should not be used in canning. It cannot be relied on to prevent spoilage or to give satisfactory products. Adequate heat treatment is the only safe procedure.

Is it safe to can green beans in a boiling water bath if vinegar is used? No. Recommended processing methods must be used to assure safety. Recommended processing times cannot be shortened if vinegar is used in canning fresh vegetables. (This does not refer to pickled vegetables.)

Should all vegetables be precooked before canning? For best quality, yes. However, some vegetables can be packed raw or cold into jars before being processed in the pressure canner.

What vegetables expand instead of shrink during processing? Corn, peas and lima beans are starchy and expand during processing. They should be packed loosely.

What causes corn to turn brown during processing? This occurs most often when too high a temperature is used causing caramelization of the sugar in the corn. It may also be caused by some minerals in the water used in canning.

Why is canning summer squash or zucchini not recommended? Earlier recommendations for canning summer squashes, including zucchini, have been withdrawn due to uncertainty about the determination of processing times. Squashes are low-acid vegetables and require pressure canning for a known period of time that will destroy the bacteria that cause botulism. Documentation for the previous processing times cannot be found, and reports that are available do not support the old process. Slices or cubes of cooked summer squash will get quite soft and pack tightly into the jars. The amount of squash filled into a jar will affect the heating pattern in the jar. It is best to freeze or pickle summer squashes, but they may also be dried.

Can I can my own salsa recipe? Salsas are usually mixtures of acid and low-acid ingredients; they are an example of an acidified food. The specific recipe and sometimes preparation methods, will determine if a salsa can be processed in a boiling water canner or a pressure canner. The process must be scientifically determined for each recipe. To can salsa at home, request [HGIC 3360, Preserving Tomato Products](#) for the recipe for Hot Chile Salsa or [HGIC 3340, Preserving Tomato Sauces & Ketchup](#) for Mexican Tomato Sauce. Your county Extension agent may have additional tested recipes for salsas.



MONEY SAVING TIPS



- Eat first—Never shop hungry
- Make a List before you leave home and check what you already have on hand.
- Review store ads and coupons at home.
- Try Store Brands.
- Use your food budget wisely, for the price of a bag of chips you could buy a lot of apples, carrots and other healthier foods.
- Do “batch cooking” when food budget and time allow. Cook large amounts of different meals and divide into family servings. Freeze and serve later in the month.

HEALTHY TID BITS

Spring and Summer Safe Grilling Tips



Grilling and picnicking often go hand-in-hand. And just as with cooking indoors, there are important guidelines that should be followed to ensure that your **grilled food** reaches the table **safely**.

- **Marinate safely.** Marinate foods in the refrigerator - *never* on the kitchen counter or outdoors. In addition, if you plan to use some of the marinade as a sauce on the cooked food, *reserve a portion separately* before adding the raw meat, poultry, or seafood. **Don't reuse marinade.**
- **Cook immediately after "partial cooking."** If you partially cook food to reduce grilling time, do so *immediately before* the food goes on the hot grill.
- **Cook food thoroughly.** When it's time to cook the food, have your food thermometer ready. Always use it to be sure your food is cooked thoroughly.
- **Keep "ready" food hot.** Grilled food can be kept hot until served by moving it to the side of the grill rack, just away from the coals. This keeps it hot but prevents overcooking.

Don't reuse platters or utensils. Using the same platter or utensils that previously held raw meat, poultry, or seafood allows bacteria from the raw food's juices to spread to the cooked food. Instead, have a clean platter and utensils ready at grill-side to serve your food.

Safe Food Temperature Chart

Food	Steak, Roasts	Fish	Pork	Ground Beef	Chicken Breast	Whole Poultry	Shrimp, Lobster, Crabs	Oysters, Clams, Mussels	Egg Dishes
Temp	145°F	145°F	160°F	160°F	165°F	165°F	Cook until pearly opaque	Cook until shells are open	160°F