



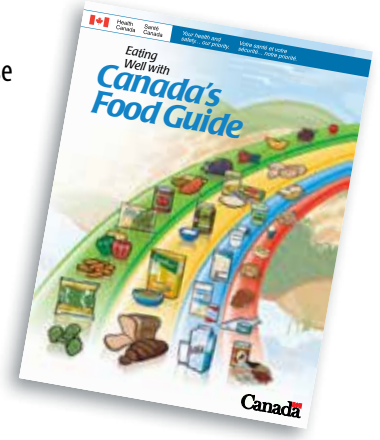
# Vegetables and Fruit

Vegetables and fruit are nature's fast food – just wash and go! There are lots of vegetables and fruits to choose from and many delicious ways to prepare them.

## Eating your veggies and fruit is important!

Vegetables and fruit have important nutrients such as vitamins, minerals and fibre. They are usually low in fat and calories. A healthy diet with lots of different vegetables and fruit may help reduce the risk of certain cancers. Eating lots of vegetables and fruit may also lower your risk for heart disease.

The Vegetables and Fruit food group is the most prominent arc in the rainbow on Canada's Food Guide, emphasizing the important role these foods play in the healthy eating pattern.



## Are you getting enough?

To see the number of Food Guide Servings of vegetables and fruit you need every day, find your age group and sex in the table below:

	Children			Teens		Adults			
	2–3	4–8	9–13	14–18 Years		19–50 Years		51+ Years	
	Girls and Boys			Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male
<b>Vegetables and Fruit</b>	4	5	6	7	8	7–8	8–10	7	7

## Make each vegetable and fruit serving count!

Eat a variety of types and colours of vegetables and fruit to give your body the mix of nutrients it needs.

## What is One Food Guide Serving?

Look at some examples below.

<p><b>Fresh, frozen or canned vegetables</b> 125 mL (1/2 cup) </p>	<p><b>Leafy vegetables</b> Cooked: 125 mL (1/2 cup)  Raw: 250 mL (1 cup) </p>	<p><b>Fresh, frozen or canned fruits</b> 1 fruit or 125 mL (1/2 cup) </p>

Make sure you...

- Eat at least one dark green and one orange vegetable every day to help you get enough folate and vitamin A.
- Choose vegetables and fruit prepared with little or no added fat, sugar or salt.
- Have vegetables and fruit more often than juice.

## Tips for choosing and enjoying vegetables and fruit.

- Eat dark green vegetables every day, such as arugula, broccoli, chard, kale, collards, and salad greens (romaine lettuce, spinach or mesclun mix).
- Choose orange vegetables such as carrots, sweet potatoes, squash, pumpkin or yams.
- If using canned vegetables, choose ones lower in sodium, or drain and rinse them.
- Choose unsweetened frozen fruit or fruit packed in juice. Fruit in heavy syrup has more sugar and calories.

### Choose vegetables and fruit more often than juice.

- Eating vegetables and fruit provides more fibre than juice.
- If you drink juice, select 100% fruit juice.
- If you drink vegetable juice, choose one that is lower in sodium – many vegetable juices contain a lot of added sodium. Check the % Daily Value (% DV) for sodium. Remember, 5% DV or less is **a little** and 15% DV or more is **a lot**.

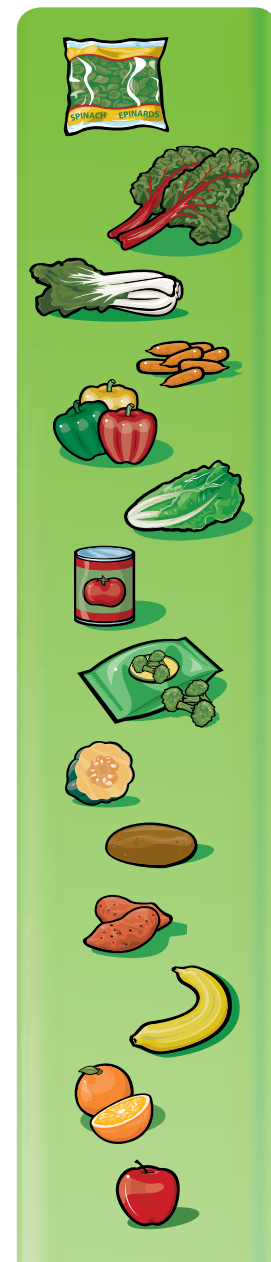
## Prepare vegetables and fruit that taste great!

### Prepare vegetables and fruit with little or no added fat, sugar or salt.

- Have a baked potato, sweet potato, or salad instead of French fries, poutine, or other deep-fried vegetables.
- Avoid adding butter, sour cream and rich sauces to vegetables.
- Steam or microwave vegetables in a small amount of water for a few minutes to retain more nutrients than boiling.
- Use fresh or dried herbs, spices, flavoured vinegar or lemon juice instead of salt to enhance the flavour of vegetables.
- Savour the flavour of seasonal vegetables and fruit.
- Prepare orange vegetables (squash, pumpkin, sweet potatoes or yams) by baking, boiling or pureeing them in soups.

### Make the healthy choice the easy choice.

- Wash, chop and refrigerate or freeze extra vegetables and fruit when preparing meals so you have extra for lunches, snacks, and meals the next day.
- Serve a platter of vegetables or fruit. Try them with dips made with lower fat plain yogurt, with no added sugars.
- Keep a bowl of whole fruit on the table or in the fridge.



### Did you Know?

Some products with “vegetable” and “fruit” in their names or on their packaging, can be high in fat, sugar or sodium. Limit foods like fruit candies, vegetable chips, fruit jams or spreads, and vegetable or fruit drinks and punches. These foods do not belong in the Vegetables and Fruit food group.

[www.canada.ca/foodguide](http://www.canada.ca/foodguide)