

The Facts About Fruit

Fruits are important sources of many nutrients, including potassium, vitamin C and folate. They also provide fiber for our eating plans.

Potassium helps:

- maintain healthy blood pressure

Vitamin C helps:

- build and repair body tissues
- heal cuts and wounds
- keep teeth and gums healthy

Folate helps:

- form red blood cells
- reduce the risk of neural tube defects

Dietary fiber helps:

- reduce blood cholesterol levels
- reduce the risk of heart disease
- maintain proper bowel function
- reduce constipation
- provide a feeling of fullness with fewer calories

Eat a variety of fruit, since fruits differ in nutrient content. Based on a 2,000 calorie eating plan, 2 cups of fruit are needed daily. You may need more or less depending on your age, sex and level of physical activity.

One cup of fruit is:

- cup canned, cooked or frozen fruit
- 1 cup fresh fruit, whole, cut-up or pureed
 - 1 small apple
 - 1 large banana
 - 1 large orange
- 8 fluid ounces of 100% fruit juice
- ½ cup dried fruit

When buying fruit "drinks" or juices, consider:

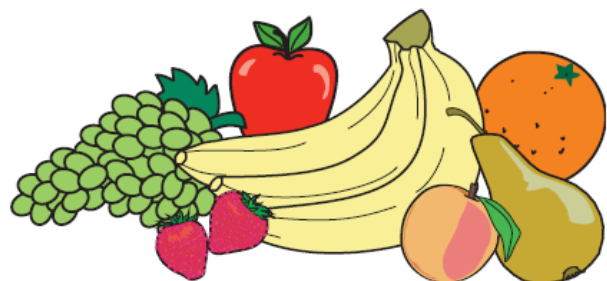
- Fruit juices contain little or no fiber, so make most of your choices whole or cut-up fruit. Go easy on juice.
- Fruit "drinks" have little juice, if any, and large amounts of sugar. Purchase 100% fruit juice.
- Juices cost more than fruit drinks, but contain more nutrients.
- Many fruit "drinks" have vitamin C added, but have few other nutrients that fruit juice has naturally.

When buying fresh fruits, get the most for your money by selecting:

- fruits in season
- only amounts needed to avoid waste
- quality, not size and
- firm fruit with good color and no bruises

When buying canned, frozen and dried fruits, remember that:

- Dried and frozen fruits are usually more expensive, but last longer than fresh fruit.
- Canned goods have lower priced brands (generic brands) and grades.

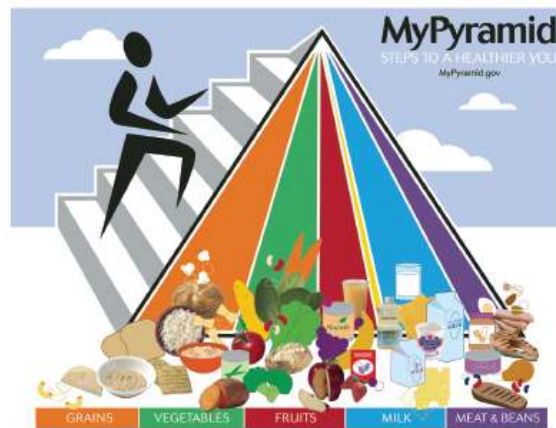


- Canned fruit often has added sugar; look for canned fruits packed in 100% fruit juice or water.

When preparing fruits to eat:

- Wash all fresh fruits before preparing or eating them by running clean, cold water over them (do not soak in water) and rub fruits briskly with your hands to remove dirt and surface microorganisms. Dry after washing.
- Wash soft fruits, such as berries, just before serving, this will keep the fruit fresher longer.

- Avoid bruising and losing nutrients by handling as little as possible.
- Dip certain fruits, like cut apples, in citrus juices to prevent cut pieces from browning.
- Remember that cooking changes fresh fruit flavors and softens fiber; therefore, cook fruits for as short as a time as possible to help keep flavor, color, shape and as many of the nutrients as possible.



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Revision



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*E-mail: mmmiller@aq.tamu.edu

*Fax: (903)427-3867

*Mail: Meko Miller, CEA-FCS, 402 North Cedar Street, Clarksville, TX 75426

*Drop off at the Red River County Extension Office located across the street from the courthouse.

Participants who complete this brief Satisfaction Survey will be entered to win a cookbook valued at \$25.00.

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