

# COLOR YOUR DIET



**Who likes colors?** Fruits and vegetables come in every color of the rainbow! They have many different tastes; some are sweet and some are sour. You can pick the ones you like and make them anyway you like. Now let's dig in and find out why it's so important to eat these colorful foods!

## Why eat fruits and vegetables?

1. Eating fruit provides health benefits, and people who eat more fruits and vegetables as a part of their daily diet are more likely to have a reduced risk of chronic diseases.

2. Most fruits are naturally low in fat, sodium, and calories. NONE have cholesterol.

3. Fruits are important sources of many nutrients including potassium, dietary fiber, vitamin A, and vitamin C.

- ❖ Vitamin C helps heal cuts and wounds and keeps teeth and gums healthy.
- ❖ Vitamin A keeps eyes and skin healthy and helps to protect against infections.

- ❖ Dietary fiber from vegetables helps reduce cholesterol levels and may lower the risk of heart disease.

## Why is variety important?

Green, orange, yellow, blue, purple, red, or white, as well as large, small, long, or short – fruits and vegetables are as diverse as people! It's important to get a variety of fruits and vegetables in all ranges of colors in order to get valuable nutrients such as fiber, folic acid, potassium, vitamin A, and vitamin C. Every fruit and vegetable supplies different nutrients.



There are five main groups of colors of fruits and vegetables: blue/purple, green, white, yellow/orange, and red. The blue/purple group consists of fruits like blackberries, blueberries, black olives, purple figs, and raisins, as well as vegetables like eggplant, black beans, and fava. The green group consists of fruits like avocados, green apples, and kiwifruit, as well as vegetables like artichokes, green beans, and celery. The white group consists of fruits like bananas, dates, and white peaches, as well as vegetables like cauliflower, garlic, and ginger. The yellow/orange group consists of fruits like apricots, grapefruit, and nectarines, as well as vegetables like carrots,

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squash, and sweet corn. The red group consists of fruits like cherries, red grapes, and strawberries, as well as vegetables like beets, radishes, and tomatoes.

Next time you are in the grocery store and you walk through the produce section, remember to look at the variety of colors in the fruits and vegetables. Try and pick out a range of colors in fruits and vegetables and incorporate them into your diet. This way, you can ensure that you are getting a variety of nutrients from different fruits and vegetables.

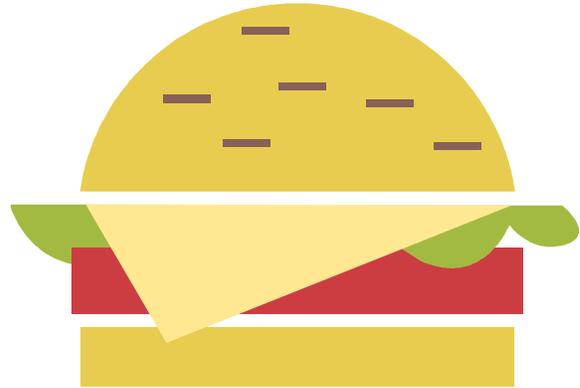
## Tips to eat more:

### BREAKFAST:

- ❖ Add tomato or other vegetables to your eggs in the morning; for example, try an omelet with tomato and broccoli, and maybe even some cheese!
- ❖ Add fruits such as strawberries, blueberries, or bananas to your cereal in the morning. Try Cheerios with banana!
- ❖ Bring a piece of fruit as a morning snack; for example, enjoy an apple with peanut butter.

### LUNCH:

- ❖ Add tomato and lettuce or other vegetables to your sandwich for lunch. Munch on a bacon, lettuce, and tomato sandwich!
- ❖ Bring a salad for lunch such as fresh lettuce, tomato, cucumber, and anything else you want to add.



- ❖ Substitute fruits for dessert! Try a fruit cup with yogurt.
- ❖ Choose vegetables and fruits with your school lunch.
- ❖ Bring a box of raisins to school for an afternoon snack!

### DINNER:

- ❖ Select pizza with vegetable toppings like spinach, broccoli, or a vegetable of your choice. Pizza with broccoli and tomato is delicious!

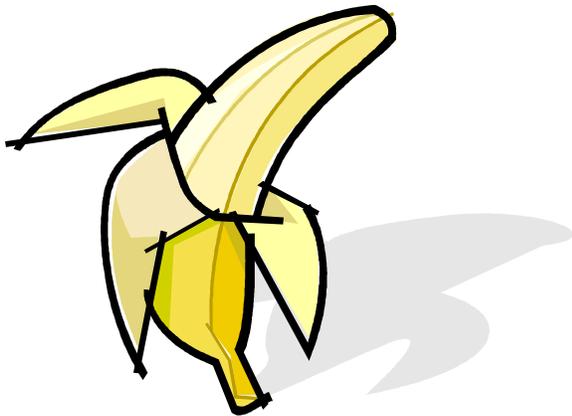


- ❖ Pick broth-based soups with plenty of vegetables!
- ❖ Create a stir-fry of fresh vegetables with a healthy choice of meat.
- ❖ Add fresh fruit to your favorite ice cream for a tasty dessert!

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## Recipe

### *\*Banana In a Blanket*



Preparation time: 5 minutes

#### Ingredients:

- 1 (6 inch) whole-wheat tortilla
- 1-tablespoon reduced-fat smooth peanut butter
- 1 medium banana
- 1-teaspoon maple syrup or honey
- 1-tablespoon crunchy, nutty granola cereal

#### Instructions:

Lay tortilla on a plate. Spread peanut butter evenly on the tortilla. Sprinkle cereal over peanut butter. Peel and place banana on the tortilla and roll the tortilla. Drizzle maple syrup or honey on top. Optional: garnish with more cereal on top.

Serves: 1

½ Cup of Fruit per Serving

Fruit and/or Vegetable Color(s): White

\* Recipe was developed for Produce for Better Health Foundation by Chef Mark Goodwin, CEC, CNC. This recipe meets PBH and Centers for Disease Control & Prevention (CDC) nutrition standards that maintain fruits and vegetables as healthy foods.

Recipe from the **Cool Fuel for Kids** cookbook.

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For more information, visit these references:

[www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov)

[www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org](http://www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org)

