

EAT THE RAINBOW

A colorful way to eat healthy

Would your grilled chicken kabob at a summer barbeque taste as good without onions and peppers? Doesn't bland cereal improve when you top it with bananas and blueberries? Eating fruits and vegetables is not only delicious, but also important for any healthy diet. In fact, the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) encourages us to make half of our plate fruits and vegetables at every meal.¹ The benefits of eating fruits and vegetables include disease prevention, weight loss, and workout recovery.²

When deciding which fruits and vegetables to choose, the best option is to "eat the rainbow" – different colored fruits and vegetables contain different vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients that boost various functions in the body. To make sure you are getting the maximum nutritional benefits out of your food, try to have at least three colors at every meal.³ Reference the infographic below to see how each color benefits your body.³⁻⁸

RED

Supports heart health and improves blood flow

Key nutrients: Vitamin C, vitamin E, anthocyanin, carotenoid, lycopene, terpene

Try: Cherry, cranberry, strawberry, red onion, tomato



ORANGE

Protects the skin and supports the respiratory, digestive, and immune systems

Key nutrients: Vitamin A, vitamin C, magnesium, potassium, carotenoid, polyphenol, terpene

Try: Apricot, nectarine, cantaloupe, carrot, papaya



YELLOW

Optimizes brain function and maintains healthy skin

Key nutrients: Vitamin A, vitamin C, polyphenol

Try: Yellow pepper, squash, sweet corn, pineapple



WHITE

Enhances the recovery of the immune and lymph systems

Key nutrients: Vitamin C, potassium, sulfide

Try: Banana, garlic, ginger, mushroom, onion



GREEN

Restores muscles and bones, and fights cancer

Key nutrients: Vitamin A, vitamin C, vitamin E, vitamin K, folate, potassium, carotenoid, sulfide, terpene

Try: Spinach, avocado, broccoli, leafy greens, kiwi

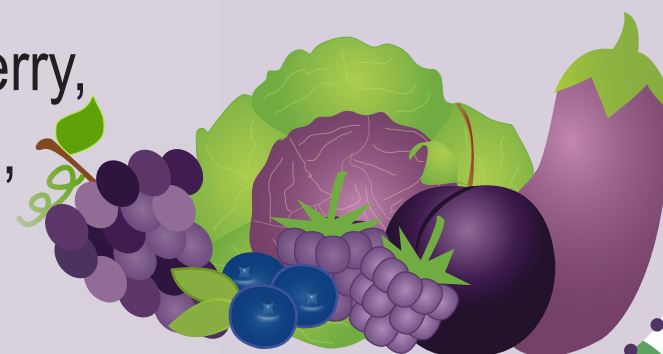


PURPLE

Promotes circulation and fights life threatening diseases such as cancer and heart disease

Key nutrients: Vitamin A, vitamin C, iron, polyphenol

Try: Blackberry, blueberry, plum, eggplant, grapes, purple cabbage



Where can I get more information on healthy eating?

Check out the resources below for more information on fruits and vegetables, as well as eating healthy on a budget, family and kid-friendly tips, performance nutrition, and more!

- To learn more about the vitamins, minerals, and phytonutrients found in fruits and vegetables, reference the [Vitamins and Minerals](#) and [Phytonutrients](#) NMCPHC Nutri-Facts series.
- Questions about proper portion sizes? Check out the [Size Up Your Servings](#) infographic.
- To learn how to incorporate more fruits and veggies into your diet, reference or complete the [30-Day Fruit and Veggie Challenge](#).
- Find more information about the [importance of eating fruits and vegetables](#).
- Do you often eat while distracted? Take these steps to practice [mindful eating](#).
- Health promoters can find resources to support Fruits and Vegetables Month in the [NMCPHC Fruits and Vegetables Health Promotion Toolbox](#).
- For general nutrition tips, visit the [NMCPHC's Healthy Eating page](#).
- To learn how healthy living can keep you and your family mission ready, check out the [Military Health System's Operation Live Well campaign](#).
- For information on healthy eating, physical activity, weight management, food tracking, and more, check out [USDA's ChooseMyPlate.gov](#).
- If you currently have diabetes, high blood pressure, or other chronic illnesses, be sure to consult with your health care provider for specific diet recommendations.



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