

True or False? Test your fruit and veggie IQ.

Eating fruits and vegetables everyday as part of a healthy diet can help you fight disease.

TRUE: A good source of many essential vitamins and minerals, fruits and vegetables are important to promoting good health. Research consistently shows that 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, type 2 diabetes, certain cancers, and perhaps heart disease and high blood pressure.

Most people do not eat enough fruits and vegetables for good health.

TRUE: Despite the many health benefits, most Americans do not consume enough fruit and vegetables every day. Are you meeting your needs? Visit www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov to see how many cups you need each day.

Fruits and vegetables can play a role in weight management.

TRUE: Besides having vitamins and minerals that can help protect your health, many fruits and vegetables are lower in calories and higher in fiber than other foods. Studies have shown that when people eat more low-calorie foods, they naturally eat fewer high-calorie foods. That's because people tend to eat similar amounts of food even when the calories in the food vary. As part of a healthy diet, eating fruits and vegetables instead of high-fat foods may make it easier to control your weight.

Green vegetables are the most nutritious.

FALSE: No one food contains all the nutrients your body needs. To get a healthy variety, think color. Eating fruits and vegetables of different colors, including plenty of dark green vegetables, gives your body a wide range of nutrients, like fiber, folate, potassium, and vitamins A and C.

Fruits and vegetables are always more expensive than other foods.

FALSE: The USDA analyzed the prices of 154 different forms of fruits and vegetables and found that more than half cost less than 25 cents per serving. Compared to a candy bar, soda, or snack grab bag, fruits and veggies are a bargain. *Based on 1999 A.C. Nielson Homescan data.*

Fresh, frozen, canned, and dried varieties of fruits and vegetables all count toward your daily recommendation.

TRUE: No matter what the form — fresh, frozen, canned, dried, juice — all varieties of fruits and vegetables count toward your daily recommendation. Choose fruits without

added sugar or syrups and vegetables without added salt, butter, or cream sauces. Although 100% fruit or vegetable juice counts toward your daily recommendation, the majority of the total daily amount of fruits and vegetables should come from whole fruits and vegetables to help you get enough fiber.

Preparing fruits and vegetables always takes too much time.

FALSE: With so many varieties to choose from, it's easier than ever to eat more fruits and vegetables. Look for simple recipes that take only minutes to prepare. See reverse side for three great options. Or try whole fruits and vegetables. There are many varieties you can just rinse and eat.

* In addition to fruits and vegetables, a healthy diet also includes whole grains, fat-free or low-fat milk products, lean meats, fish, beans, eggs and nuts, and is low in saturated fats, *trans* fats, cholesterol, salt, and added sugars. A healthy diet also means staying within your daily calorie needs.

Recipes

10 Minutes

Black Beans with Corn & Tomatoes

Need a side dish or quick dip? This versatile dish is great with grilled chicken fajitas and baked tortilla chips.

1 15-ounce can low-sodium no-fat-added black beans

1 cup frozen corn, thawed

1 cup cut tomatoes (fresh or low-sodium canned)

1 clove garlic, minced

1 tsp chopped fresh parsley (optional)

1/2 tsp chili powder

1/8 tsp cayenne pepper or more to taste

- Drain and rinse beans.
- In a bowl, combine beans, corn, tomatoes, and garlic.
- Add parsley, pepper, and chili powder.
- Combine and serve.

(Makes 4 servings.)

*Nutrition info per serving: Calories: 110kcal; Fat 1g; Sodium 230mg; Carb 25g; Fiber 7g; Protein 6g; Vit A 10%; Vit C 20%; Calcium 4%; Iron 10%

30 Minutes

Pasta Primavera

Ready in just 30 minutes, this healthy version of the classic pasta dish is sure to be a favorite with family and friends.

1 cup broccoli florets

1 cup sliced carrots

1 cup sliced zucchini

1 cup macaroni or rotini pasta

Sauce:

1 Tbsp flour

1 Tbsp soft margarine

1 cup skim (fat-free) milk

1/4 tsp dried basil

1/8 tsp black pepper

2 Tbsp Parmesan cheese

- Steam vegetables until crisp-tender, about 5 minutes.
- Cook pasta according to package directions.
- In a small saucepan, melt margarine and blend in flour. Gradually stir in milk, basil, and pepper.
- Cook over medium heat, stirring constantly, until sauce thickens.
- Remove from heat and blend in cheese. Pour over hot vegetables.
- Add macaroni and mix together.

(Makes 2 servings.)

*Nutrition info per serving:

Calories: 360kcal; Fat 8g; Sodium 200mg; Carb 56g; Fiber 5g; Protein 15g; Vit A 180%; Vit C 80%; Calcium 25%; Iron 15%

15 Minutes

Colorful Edamame Salad

This attractive salad will brighten up any plate. Serve as a first course or along side grilled chicken or fish.

1 1/2 cup shelled frozen edamame

4 cups romaine lettuce, cut

1 cup shredded carrots

2 cups halved grape tomatoes

1 cup sliced cucumber

1/2 cup chopped red onion

- Add shelled edamame to 3 cups of boiling water and cook 4 minutes. Drain and rinse with cold running water to cool.
- Mix all other ingredients and combine with the edamame in a large salad bowl.
- If desired, toss with a low-fat dressing of your choice. *Note: The dressing is not included in the nutritional analysis below.*

(Makes 4 servings.)

*Nutrition info per serving:

Calories: 120kcal; Fat 2.5g; Sodium 80mg; Carb 17g; Fiber 4g; Protein 9g; Vit A 150%; Vit C 45%; Calcium 10%; Iron 10%

* Vitamin A, Vitamin C, Calcium and Iron listed as % of daily value based on 2,000 calories

Visit www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov for more great recipes and tips to keep food safe.