



Senior Series

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Putting MyPyramid on Your Table

Fruit Group

MyPyramid is a guide to help people of any age plan a healthy diet. As we age, we need to plan more carefully the food that we choose in order to stay healthy. Individual calorie and nutrient needs change over time. This series of *Putting MyPyramid on Your Table* can help you choose foods that fit into a daily food plan to maintain good health.



Fruit Group
Focus on fruits

MyPyramid.gov

Choosing Fruit

Any fruit or 100% fruit juice counts as part of the fruit group. Fruits may be fresh, canned, frozen, or dried, and may be whole, cut-up, or pureed. Two cups of fruit per day are recommended based on a 2,000-calorie diet. In general, 1 cup of fruit or 100% fruit juice, or ½ cup of dried fruit is considered as 1 cup from the fruit group. Keep in mind that whole or cut-up fruits contain higher fiber content than juices.

Eating a diet rich in fruits as part of an overall healthy diet may reduce risk for stroke and other cardiovascular diseases, type 2 diabetes, and may protect against certain cancers.

Nutrient	Food Example	Nutrient Function
Source of vitamin A	Mango, cantaloupe, grapefruit	Helps maintain teeth, tissues, and skin. Promotes good vision.
Source of vitamin C	Oranges, kiwi, strawberries	Needed for growth and repair of tissues, helps prevent bruising and healing of cuts.
Source of folate	Oranges and orange juice	Helps tissues grow and cells work. Helps body use proteins.
Source of potassium	Bananas, dried fruits, cantaloupe and honeydew melons	Needed for cell functions in the body.

Buying Fruit

Follow these guidelines when selecting different forms of fruit at the grocery store and storing them at home.

- **Buy fruit in season.** It is lower in cost. Wash fruit before eating to prevent food borne illness. Only buy what you will use. Fresh fruit can spoil easily. Select fruits that are ripe, bright in color, and do not have spots on them.
- **Canned.** Do not purchase cans that have dents or bulges. Read labels carefully to compare the amount of calories in fruits that are packed in natural juices, light syrup, or heavy syrup. It is healthier to select fruits that are canned in natural juices. Canned foods may be stored in a cool, dry place for up to one year and juices for six months.
- **Frozen.** Buying frozen pieces of fruit is convenient. Include fruit in

salads and other dishes for flavor and color. Fruits may be stored in the freezer for up to twelve months, and juices six months. Longer storage may result in a change in the texture of the fruit.

- **Dried.** Dried fruits are easy to use, easy to store, and make a great high-fiber snack. Check the label for calorie and sugar content. Dried foods should be stored in an airtight container for up to six months.

If you can or freeze your own fruits and vegetables, check with your county Extension office for the current recommendations for canning and freezing foods safely.

Consume a variety of nutrient dense foods and beverages within and among the basic food groups while choosing foods that limit the intake of saturated and trans fats, cholesterol, added sugars, salt, and alcohol.

Fruits are an important part of MyPyramid. Look for other *Putting MyPyramid on Your Table* fact sheets.

References

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Authors

- Linnette Goard, M.S., Extension Educator, Ohio State University Extension, Lorain County.
- Cindy Oliveri, M.S., Extension Specialist, Ohio State University Extension, Center at Piketon.

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Keith L. Smith, Ph.D., Associate Vice President for Agricultural Administration and Director, Ohio State University Extension

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