

## 5 to 9 Fruits and Veggies a Day

The FDA just approved the new charts for eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables to help reduce the risk of cancer and other chronic diseases. Fruits and vegetables are high in fiber and low in calories so they keep you full longer and help cut out that sugar craving we all get. Fruits and vegetables come in a variety of colors and by choosing different colored groups, you will benefit from the different vitamins, minerals and antioxidants present.

Below is a list of the different colored groups of fruits and vegetables:

**RED:** Lycopene is the main antioxidant found in red and pink fruits and vegetables. Diets rich in lycopene help combat heart disease and some cancers. Some common fruits and vegetables include tomatoes, grapefruit, watermelons and papayas. (Link to Mediplex product)

**GREEN:** Phytochemicals are present in all green fruits and vegetables. Phytochemicals help keep your eyes and retina strong. Studies are being performed to see if phytochemicals reduce the risk of cancerous tumors. Green vegetables are also high in fiber. Some common fruits and vegetables include spinach, broccoli, kale, brussel sprouts, cauliflower and turnips. (Link to Phytoplex)

**ORANGE/YELLOW:** Carotenoids are natural antioxidants that are the main component of Beta-carotene. This natural occurring antioxidant is being studied for its ability to enhance the immune system. Folate, a mineral that should be consumed by all women of child-bearing age and beyond, also can help reduce heart disease. Some common fruits and vegetables include sweet potatoes, corn, carrots, mangoes, oranges, pineapples and pears.

**BLUE/PURPLE:** Anthocyanins, another phytochemical, is the most health-beneficial antioxidant. It helps build the body's defense mechanism to fight harmful carcinogens. The most popular blue fruits are blueberries, blackberries and red grapes.

**WHITE:** Allicin (another phytochemical) helps lower cholesterol, blood pressure, and helps the body's ability to fight infections. Polyphenols also help reduce the risk of certain cancers. Some white fruits and vegetables include onions, leeks, garlic, shallots, pears, green grapes and cauliflower.

What is a Serving?

Portion-control is the easiest and most effective way to lose and maintain weight loss. Think of one serving of fruits and vegetables should fit in the palm of your hand, smaller than most people think. This portion-controlled way of eating makes it easier to consume 5 to 9 fruits and vegetables each day.

One serving equals:

- Small glass of 100% fruit or vegetable juice &ndash; ¾ cup or 6oz
- A medium sized piece of fruit &ndash; orange, small banana or medium-sized apple
- 1 cup raw salad greens
- ½ cup of cooked vegetables
- ½ cup of cut-up fruit or vegetables
- ¼ cup of dried fruit
- ½ cup of cooked beans or peas

Seven servings a day is as easy as 1 cup orange juice and 1 medium banana for breakfast, 2 cups salad and vegetables and 1 medium sized apple for lunch, and ½ sweet potato and ½ cup mixed fruit with dinner and you've just consumed the 7 servings needed for most women a day.