

Eating Fruits & Vegetables is Important!

Eating fruits and vegetables every day is an essential part of a healthy diet. Eating five or more servings of fruits and vegetables in various colors, like **BLUE/PURPLE, GREEN, WHITE, YELLOW/ORANGE, AND RED**, provides the necessary vitamins, minerals, fiber and phytochemicals to maintain good health, provide energy and reduce the risk of cancer and heart disease.

In school or on the playing field, kids who eat well perform better. Eating a nutritious diet fuels the body for learning, growth, sports, and play. Kids who eat a balanced diet have bright eyes, healthy skin and teeth, and bodies that look and feel great!

Fruits and vegetables are very rich in Vitamins A and C, Folic Acid, Magnesium, and Potassium.

- 🍌 Vitamin A helps maintain skin and mucous membranes and aids in vision.
- 🍌 Vitamin C helps the body heal and fight infections.
- 🍌 Folic acid is needed for healthy blood cells and is important for cell division and growth.
- 🍌 Magnesium is found in bones and is important for muscle and nerve function.
- 🍌 Potassium maintains the heart beat, regulates body fluids, and is needed for muscle and nerve function.

Eating the right balance of foods helps maintain a healthy weight. We need to eat at least 5 to 9 servings of fruits and vegetables each day for good health. Please refer to the handout "What is a Serving?" on page 22 for more information, or go to the Dole 5 A Day website <http://www.dole5aday.com> for fun activities and detailed facts on fruits and vegetables.

Teach your students to fuel their bodies with nutritious foods that give lots of energy and help them perform at their best. It's easy and fun to eat fruits and vegetables as fast snacks!

As a teacher you can set a powerful example for your students.
Here are some healthy fast snacks!

Whole fruit
Berries

Raw, cut up vegetables
Dried fruit

Don't Forget Water!!

We need lots of fresh water to stay healthy. Aside from aiding in digestion and absorption of food, water regulates body temperature and blood circulation, carries nutrients and oxygen to cells, and removes toxins and other wastes. Water is particularly important for keeping the kidneys healthy. This "body water" also cushions joints and protects tissues and organs, including the spinal cord, from shock and damage. Conversely, lack of water (dehydration) can be the cause of many ailments including hypertension, asthma, allergies, and migraine headaches. We can exist without food for two months or more, but we can only survive for a few days without water.

Although we all know the importance of drinking enough water during the hot summer months, many people don't realize they need to drink plenty of water all year round. Thirst can be slow to develop - often we don't feel thirsty even when our bodies need fluid. We often confuse thirst with hunger too. Sometimes when you think your body is asking for food, what it really needs is water. This is why it's a good habit to drink water regularly - whether you feel thirsty or not.