

## VEGETABLES: How Much Do I Need?

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Vegetables are good for you. They are full of fiber; vitamins, minerals, and thousands of powerful things called antioxidants and phytochemicals. These things give vegetables their color, flavor, and smell. And, when you eat them, they also protect you from many different diseases like heart disease and cancer. Make half your plate fruits and vegetables. The more color the better. Try to eat at least 3 different colors of vegetables each day.

**Adults need at least 2.5 cups of vegetables each day.**

**Kids need at least 1.5 cups of vegetables each day.**

(See the next page for the amount of fruit that is recommended based on age and sex.)

### What does a 1/2 to 1 cup of vegetables look like?



**2 cups of raw leafy vegetables  
= 1 cup of vegetables**



**softball**



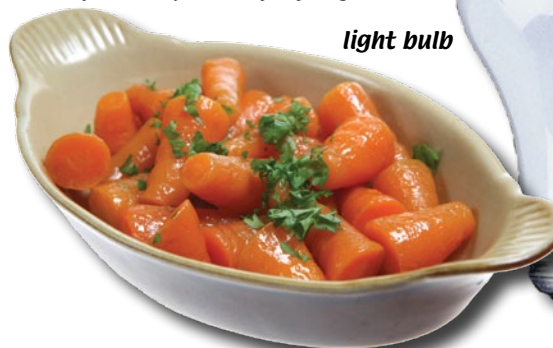
**1 cup of tomato juice  
= 1 cup of vegetables**

**small styrofoam cup**



**ice cream scooper**

**1/2 cup, strips, slices, or chopped, raw or cooked, or 1 medium, or 1 cup baby carrots (about 6) = 1 cup of vegetables**



**light bulb**



**1/2 cup chopped or florets of broccoli  
= 1/2 cup of vegetables**

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## How many vegetables are needed daily or weekly?

Vegetable choices should be selected from among the vegetable subgroups. It is not necessary to eat vegetables from each subgroup daily. However, over a week, try to consume the amounts listed from each subgroup as a way to reach your daily intake recommendation.

The amount of vegetables you need to eat depends on your age, sex, and level of physical activity. Recommended total daily amounts are shown in the first chart. Recommended weekly amounts from each vegetable subgroup are shown in the second chart.

Daily recommendation*					
<b>Children</b>	2-3 years old	1 cup	<b>Women</b>	19-30 years old	2 1/2 cups
	4-8 years old	1 1/2 cups		31-50 years old	2 1/2 cups
<b>Girls</b>	9-13 years old	2 cups		51+ years old	2 cups
	14-18 years old	2 1/2 cups	<b>Men</b>	19-30 years old	3 cups
<b>Boys</b>	9-13 years old	2 1/2 cups		31-50 years old	3 cups
	14-18 years old	3 cups		51+ years old	2 1/2 cups

\*These amounts are appropriate for individuals who get less than 30 minutes per day of moderate physical activity, beyond normal daily activities. Those who are more physically active may be able to consume more while staying within calorie needs.



Vegetable subgroup recommendations are given as amounts to eat WEEKLY. It is not necessary to eat vegetables from each subgroup daily. However, over a week, try to consume the amounts listed from each subgroup as a way to reach your daily intake recommendation.

		Dark green Vegetables	Red and orange vegetables	Beans and peas	Starchy vegetables	Other vegetables
<b>Children</b>	2-3 yrs old	1/2 cup	2 1/2 cups	1/2 cup	2 cups	1 1/2 cups
	4-8 yrs old	1 cup	3 cups	1/2 cup	3 1/2 cups	2 1/2 cups
<b>Girls</b>	9-13 yrs old	1 1/2 cups	4 cups	1 cup	4 cups	3 1/2 cups
	14-18 yrs old	1 1/2 cups	5 1/2 cups	1 1/2 cups	5 cups	4 cups
<b>Boys</b>	9-13 yrs old	1 1/2 cups	5 1/2 cups	1 1/2 cups	5 cups	4 cups
	14-18 yrs old	2 cups	6 cups	2 cups	6 cups	5 cups
<b>Women</b>	19-30 yrs old	1 1/2 cups	5 1/2 cups	1 1/2 cups	5 cups	4 cups
	31-50 yrs old	1 1/2 cups	5 1/2 cups	1 1/2 cups	5 cups	4 cups
	51+ yrs old	1 1/2 cups	4 cups	1 cup	4 cups	3 1/2 cups
<b>Men</b>	19-30 yrs old	2 cups	6 cups	2 cups	6 cups	5 cups
	31-50 yrs old	2 cups	6 cups	2 cups	6 cups	5 cups
	51+ yrs old	1 1/2 cups	5 1/2 cups	1 1/2 cups	5 cups	4 cups

## ***Keep your vegetables safe***

Wash vegetables before preparing or eating them.

Rub vegetables with your hands under clean, running water to remove dirt.

Keep your vegetables separate from raw meat, poultry, and seafood while shopping, preparing, and storing.



## ***Tips to help you eat your vegetables***

Buy fresh vegetables in season to save money and for best flavor.

Stock up on frozen vegetables for quick and easy cooking.

Buy canned vegetables labeled “no added salt” or “low sodium.”

Add vegetables to soups, sauces, and stews.

Add lettuce, tomato, or cucumbers to a sandwich.

Snack on baby carrots or other vegetables with low-fat salad dressing.

## ***Storing Vegetables***

Buy items with no bruises or cuts on them.

Feel, squeeze them; make sure vegetables are ripe enough, but not too ripe.

Choose vegetables that will be fresh for at least 3 to 5 days.












Place vegetables in the refrigerator: Follow the “first-in, first-out” method of storing and eating vegetables.





# When should I buy my vegetables?

Below is a calendar of when fresh vegetables are available. You will get the best value if you buy vegetables when they are in season.

January	February	March	April
Carrots Cauliflower Cabbage Broccoli Peppers 	Carrots Cauliflower Cabbage Broccoli Peppers 	Peas Carrots Cauliflower Cabbage Broccoli Peppers 	Peas Carrots Green beans Cauliflower Cabbage Broccoli Peppers 
May	June	July	August
Peas Cucumber Carrots Cauliflower Cabbage Broccoli Green beans Peppers 	Summer Squash Tomatoes Zucchini Peas Okra Cucumber Carrots Cauliflower Cabbage Broccoli Green beans Beets Peppers 	Summer Squash Tomatoes Zucchini Corn Okra Cucumber Carrots Cauliflower Cabbage Broccoli Green beans Beets Peppers 	Summer Squash Tomatoes Zucchini Corn Okra Cucumber Carrots Cauliflower Cabbage Broccoli Green beans Beets Peppers 
September	October	November	December
Summer Squash Winter Squash Corn Tomatoes Zucchini Okra Cucumber Carrots Cauliflower Cabbage Green beans Beets Peppers 	Summer Squash Winter Squash Corn Zucchini Carrots Cauliflower Cabbage Beets Peppers 	Carrots Cauliflower Cabbage Peppers Pumpkin 	Carrots Cauliflower Cabbage Peppers 

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