Fruit Group: Focus on Fruits

Kathy Daly-Koziel
University of Kentucky

Jackie Walters
University of Kentucky, jackie.walters@uky.edu

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FRUIT GROUP
Focus on Fruits

Fruits make great salads, snacks, appetizers, and desserts. They add:
▲ Fresh flavors
▲ Bright colors
▲ Different shapes and textures
▲ Vitamins C and A
▲ Lots of fiber and minerals

Fruits are low in calories, fat, and sodium. They contain no cholesterol. Eating lots of fruits can help prevent obesity and chronic diseases such as diabetes, heart disease and cancer. The U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Dietary Guidelines recommend that we consume almost as many calories from fruit as from vegetables.

As with vegetables, different fruits contain different nutrients. Eat a variety to get the most from them. To find out how many cups of fruit you should eat every day, visit <http://www.MyPyramid.gov> or complete MyPyramid Worksheet (NEP-201C).

Serving It Up
A serving is:
• ½ cup diced fruit (canned, cooked, or raw)
• 1 medium-sized whole fruit
• ¼ cup dried fruit
• ¾ cup 100% fruit juice

Treating It Right
Heat, light, and air destroy vitamin C. To save vitamin C in fruits:
• Eat raw fruits with peels.
• Wash and cut up fresh fruits just before serving.
• Cut fruits into larger pieces, rather than smaller.
• Cover cut fruits and fruit juice tightly; refrigerate.

Store bananas and unripe fruits at room temperature. Refrigerate all others when they are fully ripe.

To prevent cut fruits from turning brown, dip them in pineapple or lemon juice. Orange juice will also keep cut fruits fresh longer.
Did You Know?

- Processing can change the amounts of vitamins in fruits. Choose fresh, frozen, canned, or dried fruit.
- Most fruit juices contain no fiber.
- Keep portion size under control to keep calories under control.
- Vitamin C keeps gums and blood vessels healthy. Oranges, grapefruit, strawberries, cantaloupe, and watermelon are good sources of vitamin C.
- Vitamin A helps children grow. It keeps skin and eyes healthy. Apricots, peaches, watermelon and cantaloupe are high in vitamin A.
- Fiber prevents constipation. Fresh fruits that have not been peeled, and dried fruits such as raisins are good sources of fiber. Berries are also good sources of fiber.
- Fresh fruit and unsweetened canned fruits are low in calories. Eat canned or frozen fruit in heavy syrup only if you have calories to spare. Limit the number of sweetened fruit juices you drink.

Written by Kathy Daly-Koziel, former EFNEP Coordinator
Revised by Jackie Walters, MBA, RD, LD, Extension Associate for Nutrition Education Programs