

Background information for course leader

Fruit and vegetables are good sources of lots of different vitamins and minerals. Fruit and vegetables are very low in fat and are a great source of fibre. People who eat lots of fruit and vegetables get the vitamins and minerals to feel healthy.

Eating plenty of fruit and vegetables:

- Helps fight off infection
- Prevents heart disease
- Prevents some cancers
- Maintains normal healthy bowel function, this can help prevent constipation
- Prevent obesity, by making us feel fuller for longer

Which fruit and vegetables give us which vitamin?

Vitamin	Benefit to body	Fruit and/or vegetable
A	For growth, healthy skin and hair, helps immune system	Bananas, blackberries, avocados, melons, oranges, carrots
B	Cell repair, digestion, production of energy, immune system, healthy blood	Asparagus, broccoli, spinach, bananas, dried fruit
C	For growth, healthy body tissue, wound repair, healthy immune system, helps iron absorption	Strawberries, oranges, mangos, lemon, red pepper, spinach
E	Healthy heart, blood and circulation	Tomatoes, brussel sprouts, spinach, tropical fruits
K	Helps in blood clotting and for strong bones	Apple, banana, kiwi fruit most vegetables

Fruit and vegetables

You should eat at least five portions of fruit and vegetables every day. You can choose from fresh, frozen, tinned, dried or juiced. Choose a variety of different colours to get the most health benefits. Steam or microwave rather than boil to maintain as much goodness as possible. If you do boil, do so for the shortest time and in the least amount of water possible.

Remember potatoes do not count because they are a starchy food.

1 portion = 80g of fruit or vegetables

Sources (1 portion):

- 1 apple, banana, pear, orange or other similar sized fruit
- 2 plums or similar sized fruit
- ½ a grapefruit or avocado
- 1 slice of large fruit, such as melon or pineapple
- 3 heaped tablespoons of vegetables (raw, cooked, frozen or tinned)
- 3 heaped tablespoons of fruit salad (fresh or tinned in fruit juice) or stewed fruit
- 3 heaped tablespoons of beans and pulses*
- 1 heaped tablespoon of dried fruit (such as raisins and apricots)
- 1 handful of grapes, cherries or berries
- 1 dessert bowl of salad
- 1 glass (150ml) of fruit juice**

* However much you eat, beans and pulses count as a maximum of one portion a day

** However much you drink, fruit juice counts as a maximum of one portion a day

Reference Intakes (RIs):

The average adult of normal weight and average activity levels needs:

Each day	women	men
Portions of 80g	5 portions or more	5 portions or more

How to increase our intake:

- eat at least one portion of vegetables with each meal
- have fruit or raw vegetables for snacks.

Breakfast options:

- add a portion of fresh fruit (banana) or a tablespoon of dried fruit (raisins) to your cereal or porridge
- have a banana sandwich
- drink a glass of fruit juice – diluting juice or a fruit drink are NOT counted as a portion.

Lunch options:

- bowl of vegetable soup
- bowl of salad
- portion of vegetables with main course
- try the vegetarian option.

Evening meal options:

- have two portions of vegetables with your meal
- try the vegetarian meal option
- fresh fruit or tinned fruit in juice as pudding.

There is a dedicated section about fruit and vegetables on the Healthy Eating Healthy Living video on the SCLD website to go with this pack. It may be useful to show this to the group to aid learning or to give you ideas about what activities to do.