

Fruit/vegetable juices and smoothies

A glass (150ml) of unsweetened 100% fruit, vegetable juice or smoothie also counts as one portion. However, no matter how much you drink (for example more than 150ml), or how many varieties of fruit juice, it will still only count as one of your portions per day because the juicing process removes most of the fibre from the fruit.

Crushing fruit into juice releases the sugars contained in the fruit. So to reduce the impact on teeth, enjoy a small glass at mealtimes.

Five-a-day the easy way!

Try to eat one or two portions with each meal and make fruit or vegetables the first choice for a snack and it will be easy to eat at least five a day.

What about supplements?

Don't rely on supplements to get the vitamins and minerals your body needs unless you have been told to by a health professional, for example by a health visitor when you are planning a pregnancy. Supplements are no substitute for a healthy diet and lifestyle.

A well-balanced diet containing plenty of fruits and vegetables is cheaper and more nutritious and it is possible that certain supplement combinations can be damaging to the body. For more information, talk to your GP or another health professional like a dietitian.

Sample day:

Breakfast

A bowl of wholegrain breakfast cereal with a sliced banana and a glass of pure fruit juice.

Mid-morning snack

Munch your favourite raw vegetable crudité – cherry tomatoes, button mushrooms, carrots batons or celery sticks.

Lunch

Add a side salad, to your lunchtime sandwich and a small pack of dried raisins.

Mid-afternoon snack

Ditch the biscuits for fresh melon or mango slices.

Dinner

Indulge in a spicy chilli or hearty winter casserole packed full of seasonal vegetables.

Further information: Food Fact Sheets on other topics including Healthy Eating and Packed Lunches are available at www.bda.uk.com/foodfacts

Top tips to get your five-a-day

- **Go for those in season:** Opting for fresh produce as they are more likely to be locally grown, are value for money and often look and taste the best.
- **Eat a rainbow:** Variety is important. Different coloured fruits and vegetables contain their own combination of vitamins, minerals and fibre, so to get the most benefit, try to eat one portion from each colour group. Choose from red, green, yellow, white, purple and orange varieties of fruits and vegetables.
- **Cut down or avoid butter, cream or cheese sauces!** Even though fruit and vegetables are low in calories, remember that their calorie content is determined by what you prepare them with.
- **Be careful not to eat too many dried fruits:** While a 30g portion of dried fruits, like apricots, dates, raisins etc. counts towards your five-a-day, once fruit is dried it also becomes a concentrated source of sugar and calories. To minimise damage to teeth, keep to mealtimes and not as a between-meal snack.
- **Check nutrition information on labels and look out for the '5-a-day' logo:** Vegetables contained in convenience foods such as ready-meals, pasta sauces and takeaway meals can contribute to your five-a-day but many of these foods may be high in added salt, sugar or fat. Check out the nutrition information to see whether you can get your five-a-day, a healthier way.
- **Cut down on your meat portion sizes:** Bulk up on vegetables and pulses by adding them to stews, curries and casseroles to get extra flavour, texture and plant-based nutrition.
- **Treat your fruit and veggies right:** Nutrients in fruit and vegetables can be easily destroyed during food preparation and by heat, so whenever possible eat raw. When cooking vegetables, try steaming, microwaving, roasting or poaching rather than boiling, so the maximum amount of nutrients can be retained.
- **Keep your freezer and cupboards well stocked:** Keep a supply of frozen and/or canned vegetables and fruits at home. They are a convenient alternative to fresh varieties, stay fresher for longer and they all count towards your five-a-day.

Summary

Achieving the five-a-day target is not too hard. By eating at least five portions of a variety of fruits and vegetables a day, you will not only look and feel better, but you will give your body many essential nutrients that it needs to maintain your overall long-term health.

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The information sources used to develop this fact sheet are available at www.bda.uk.com/foodfacts.
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