fruits & veggies more matters™

The Color Way

Growing up you may have been told to eat your greens, but what about your reds, oranges, blues and whites? By putting something of every color on your plate or in your lunch bag, you are more likely to eat 5 servings of vegetables and fruits every day. Just think: 1 cup of dark, leafy **GREENS** with **WHITE** onions, ½ cup of **RED** tomatoes, ½ cup of **YELLOW** peppers, 6 oz. of **ORANGE** juice and ½ cup of **BLUE**berries. There you have 5 A Day! The more reds, oranges, greens, whites and blues you see on your plate, the more health promoting properties you are also getting from your vegetable and fruit choices. Nutrition research shows that colorful vegetables and fruits contain essential vitamins, minerals, fiber and phytochemicals that your body needs to promote health and help you feel great. Here are the specifics….

REDS

When you add deep reds or bright pinks to your daily diet, you are also adding powerful antioxidants called lycopene and anthocyanins. Diets rich in these nutrients are being studied for their ability to fight heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure, Alzheimer's Disease as well as skin, breast and prostate cancers.

Lycopene: tomato-based products (tomato juice, spaghetti sauce, tomato soup, tomato paste), watermelon, pink grapefruit, raw tomatoes, guava

Anthocyanins: red raspberries, sweet cherries, strawberries, cranberries, beets, red apples (with skin), red cabbage, red onion, kidney and red beans

GREENS

Not only do green vegetables look great and taste wonderful, they are also rich in the phytochemicals (like lutein, zeaxanthin and indoles) and essential vitamins (folate), minerals and fiber that keep you healthy. These nutrients protect your eyes, and may reduce the risk of cancerous tumors.

Lutein: kale, spinach, leafy greens (turnip, collard, mustard), romaine lettuce, broccoli, green peas, kiwifruit, honeydew melon

Indoles: broccoli, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, bok choy, arugala, Swiss chard, turnips, rutabaga, watercress, cauliflower, kale

YELLOW/ORANGE

The colors of the blazing sun are a must have in your daily diet. Yellow and orange vegetables and fruits contain beta-carotene (which turns into vitamin A), vitamin C, vitamin E, folate (a B vitamin) and bioflavonoids. Research shows that these nutrients reduce the risk for cancer and heart attacks, boost immunity, help maintain good vision and strong bones/teeth/skin.

Beta-carotene: carrots, sweet potatoes, pumpkin, butternut squash, cantaloupe, mangos, apricots, peaches

Bioflavonoids: oranges, grapefruit, lemons, tangerines, clementines, peaches, papaya, apricots, nectarines, pineapple, yellow raisins, yellow pepper

Source: NC 5 A Day Toolkit

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FIGHT CANCER, HEART DISEASE & THE EFFECTS OF AGING*

Eat Your Colors Every Day
To Stay Healthy & Fit

BLUES/PURPLES

Blues and purples not only add beautiful shades of tranquility and richness to your plate, they add health-enhancing flavonoids, phytochemicals and antioxidants, such as anthocyanins, vitamin C, folic acid and polyphenols. These nutrients help your body defend against cancer, reduce the risk of age-related memory loss, help control high blood pressure and reduce the risk of diabetes complications and heart attacks.

Anthocyanins: blueberries, blackberries, purple grapes, black currants, elderberries

Phenolics: dried plums (prunes), raisins, plums, eggplant

WHITE

White fruits and vegetables vary from sweet to strong. Vegetables from the onion family, which include garlic, chives, scallions, leeks and any variety of onion, contain the phytonutrient allicin. Research is being conducted on allicin to learn how it may help lower cholesterol and blood pressure and increase the body's ability to fight infections and cancer. Indoles and sulfaforaphanes and phytonutrients in cruciferous vegetables like cauliflower may also inhibit cancer growth.

Allicin: garlic, onions, leeks, scallions, chives, cauliflower, shallots

Phytonutrients: bananas, pears, cauliflower, jicama, mushrooms, parsnips, potatoes, turnips

Source: NC 5 A Day Toolkit