



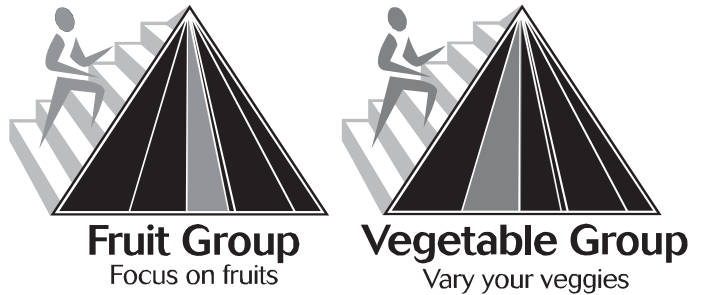
Now Serving:

# More Fruits and Vegetables!

Julie Garden-Robinson, Ph.D., LRD, Food and Nutrition Specialist

Family meals give parents/caregivers a chance to be good nutrition role models for children. Whether you're sharing a meal at a park, in a car or at the family table, children who eat with their families eat a more nutritious diet. They eat more fruits and vegetables and other nutritious foods.

Shared meals give families a chance to reconnect and talk about the events of their day. Children can learn communication skills, manners and their families' values as they share food. Sharing meals also creates memories that will last a lifetime. Keep mealtime pleasant and allow enough time to eat because children eat better in a relaxed setting.



## Aim for MyPyramid Recommendations

The MyPyramid recommendations for fruits and vegetables are in cups. The amount of fruits and vegetables recommended for people varies, depending on their age, gender and activity level.

For example, many adults need about 2,000 calories per day to meet their energy needs. Their MyPyramid plan would include 2 cups of fruit and 2½ cups of vegetables. Children ages 2 to 6 need 1½ cups to 2 cups of vegetables and about 1½ cups of fruit daily. Visit [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov) or contact your local Extension Service office to learn more about your family's needs.

Canned, fresh and frozen fruits and vegetables all count toward your goal. Vegetables are important sources of many nutrients, including potassium, dietary fiber, folate (folic acid), vitamin A, vitamin E and vitamin C. Fruits contain nutrients, such as potassium, dietary fiber, vitamin C and folate (folic acid).

**NDSU**  
**Extension Service**  
 North Dakota State University  
 Fargo, North Dakota 58105

## Focus on Fruits

A cup of fruit equals

- 1 cup cut-up fruit
- 1 cup 100 percent fruit juice
- ½ cup dried fruit
- 1 small apple (2.5 inches in diameter)
- 1 large banana
- 1 large orange (3 inches in diameter)
- 8 strawberries

## Vary Your Veggies

A cup of vegetables equals

- 1 cup raw or cooked vegetables
- 1 cup vegetable juice
- 2 cups raw, leafy greens
- 1 cup cooked dry edible beans
- 12 baby carrots
- 1 large whole tomato (3 inches in diameter)

## Safety Tips

At the grocery store, keep fruits and vegetables separate from raw meat, poultry and seafood in your shopping cart or basket. Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly before preparing and eating them. Use clean, running water and a vegetable brush if needed.

## Family Fitness Tip

On family bike rides or hikes, bring fresh fruit, such as grapes and apples, as a snack to eat on the go. They're high in water, too, so they help quench your thirst.

## Fitting in Vegetables and Fruits

Most children enjoy the sweet taste of fruits, but getting children to eat enough vegetables can be a challenge for parents/caregivers. Be patient. Sometimes getting a child to try a new food takes 10 or more tries! Try these tips:

- Encourage children to help choose fruits and vegetables at the grocery store.
- Add shredded carrots to pasta sauce, lasagna or meatloaf.
- Add extra vegetables to casseroles and soups.
- Have a bowl of fruit, such as apples or bananas, on the countertop.
- Serve raw, crunchy vegetables with low-fat dip as a snack.
- Try vegetable kabobs on the grill.
- Have fruit smoothies as a family snack.
- Serve fruit for dessert.
- If possible, have children help grow a vegetable garden or a container garden. They are likely to eat vegetables they helped grow.

### **Saving Money on Fruits and Vegetables**

Prices of fruits and vegetables vary depending on the time of year and where you live, among other things. Compare prices of fresh, frozen and canned vegetables for the best buy. Sometimes fresh fruits and vegetables are a better deal.

According to the USDA, some of the least expensive vegetables are cabbage, potatoes, regular (not baby) carrots, canned green beans, onions, bell peppers and lettuce. Some of the least expensive fruits are apples, raisins, bananas and grapefruit.

### **My Family Meal Goal to Include More Fruits and Vegetables**

---

---

---

---

# Recipes

## Strawberry Banana Smoothie

- 3 6-ounce containers low-fat or nonfat vanilla or strawberry yogurt
- 1 10-ounce package frozen, sweetened strawberries
- 1 medium banana, sliced
- ¼ c. low-fat or nonfat milk

Place all ingredients in a blender. Cover and blend on high speed until smooth (about 30 seconds). Pour in glasses and serve immediately.

*Makes four servings. Each serving has 203 calories, 0.4 gram (g) fat, 45 g carbohydrate and 2 g fiber.*

**Snack Idea:**  
Strawberry Banana Smoothie and graham crackers

## Veggies in Cheese Sauce

- 1 16-ounce package frozen vegetables of choice (such as peas and carrots)
- 2 Tbsp. margarine or butter
- 2 Tbsp. flour
- 1 c. low-fat milk
- ¼ tsp. salt
- ½ c. cheddar cheese, grated

Cook vegetables as directed on package. Melt the margarine or butter in a saucepan. Add flour until blended and bubbly. Slowly add the milk and cook until thickened. Stir in the cheese and heat until the cheese melts. Drain vegetables and add to cheese sauce.

*Makes six servings (1/2 cup each). Each serving has 142 calories, 7.4 g fat, 14.6 g carbohydrate and 2.6 g fiber.*

**Menu Idea:**  
Meatloaf, baked potatoes, Veggies in Cheese Sauce, fruit cocktail and low-fat milk

# Recipes

## 30-Minute Minestrone Soup

- 2 medium carrots, chopped
- 1 c. chopped cabbage
- 1 celery rib, thinly sliced
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 2 tsp. olive oil (or vegetable oil)
- 3 c. water
- 1 can (14.5 ounces) stewed or diced tomatoes, undrained
- 3 beef bouillon cubes
- 1 c. cooked elbow macaroni
- ¼ tsp. pepper

Cook macaroni. In a 3-quart saucepan, sauté carrots, cabbage, celery, onion and garlic in oil for five minutes. Add water, tomatoes and bouillon; bring to a boil. Reduce heat. Simmer uncovered for 20 to 25 minutes or until vegetables are tender. Stir in macaroni and pepper; heat through.

*Makes five servings. Each serving has 104 calories, 2.4 g fat, 17 g carbohydrate and 2.6 g fiber.*

Recipe source: Purdue University Extension Service

**Menu Idea:**  
Quick Minestrone, grilled cheese sandwiches, canned pears and low-fat milk

## Quick Tip

To save preparation time later, chop vegetables during the previous meal preparation.

## Eat Smart. Play Hard. Together

- For more information about food safety and nutrition, contact your county office of the NDSU Extension Service.
- Visit the NDSU Extension Service Web site [www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/food.htm](http://www.ag.ndsu.nodak.edu/food.htm). (Click on “Nutrition” then “Kids & Nutrition” for parent/caregiver information, recipes and educational activities for children.)
- Visit [www.MyPyramid.gov](http://www.MyPyramid.gov) for more information about healthy eating for the entire family.
- Visit the USDA Eat Smart. Play Hard. Web sites:
  - For parents:  
[www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardhealthylifestyle/](http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardhealthylifestyle/)
  - For kids:  
[www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardkids/](http://www.fns.usda.gov/eatsmartplayhardkids/)



“Eat Smart. Play Hard.” is an initiative of the Food and Nutrition Service, USDA.

For more information on this and other topics, see: [www.ag.ndsu.edu](http://www.ag.ndsu.edu)

County commissions, North Dakota State University and U.S. Department of Agriculture cooperating. Duane Hauck, director, Fargo, N.D. Distributed in furtherance of the acts of Congress of May 8 and June 30, 1914. We offer our programs and facilities to all people regardless of race, color, national origin, religion, gender, disability, age, veteran's status or sexual orientation; and are an equal opportunity institution. This publication will be made available in alternative formats for people with disabilities upon request, (701) 231-7881.