



## Food Group Focus: Focus on Fruits

Eating fruit provides health benefits — people who eat more fruits and vegetables as part of an overall healthy diet are likely to have a reduced risk of some chronic diseases. Fruits provide nutrients vital for health and maintenance of your body. Fruits are important sources of many nutrients, including potassium, dietary fiber, vitamin A, vitamin C, and folate (folic acid). Most fruits are naturally low in fat, sodium, and calories. None have cholesterol.

### What is the Main Focus?

1. **Choose a variety of fruits everyday** - Fruits differ in nutrient content. When you vary your fruit choices, you supply an array of nutrients and fiber to your diet.
2. **Choose fruit that is fresh, frozen, canned or dried** – Try to eat fresh, whole or cut-up fruit that is in season as much as possible. Choose frozen, canned or dried fruits without added sugars. Light or heavy syrup adds sugar to canned fruits. Dried fruits can be sweetened with added sugar. Check the food label for added sugars like high fructose corn syrup, sucrose, and dextrose.
3. **Go easy of fruit juices** – Make most of your choices whole or cut-up fruit rather than juice, for the benefits dietary fiber provides. Keep the amounts of fruit juice consumed to less than half your total fruit intake. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends children not consume more than 6oz of fruit juice per day.

### What Foods are in the Fruit Group?

Any fruit or 100% fruit juice counts as part of the fruit group. Fruits may be fresh, canned, frozen, or dried, and may be whole, cut-up, or pureed. Some commonly eaten fruits are:

Fruits		
Apples	Grapes	Papaya
Apricots*	Honeydew*	Pineapple
Avocado	Kiwi fruit*	Plums
Bananas*	Lemons	Prunes*
Blackberries	Limes	Raisins*
Blueberries	Mangoes	Raspberries
Cantaloupe*	Nectarines	Tangerines
Cherries	Oranges*	Strawberries
Fruit cocktail	Peaches	Watermelon
Grapefruit	Pears	100% Fruit Juices
*these fruits are excellent sources of potassium		

## How Much Do I Need?

The amount of fruit you need to eat depends on age, sex, and level of physical activity. Recommended daily amounts are shown in the chart.

Age		Daily Recommendation*
		Total Daily
<b>Children</b>	2 to 3 years	1 cup
	4 to 8 years	1 to 1 ½ cups
<b>Girls</b>	9 to 13 years	1 ½ cups
	14 to 18 years	1 ½ cups
<b>Boys</b>	9 to 13 years	1 ½ cups
	14 to 18 years	2 cups
<b>Women</b>	19 – 30 years	2 cups
	31 – 50 years	1 ½ cups
	51+ years	1 ½ cups
<b>Men</b>	19 – 30 years	2 cups
	31 – 50 years	2 cups
	51+ years	2 cups

\*Amounts are for those who get less than 30 minutes per day of moderate physical activity beyond normal daily activities. You may need more fruit depending on higher amounts of physical activity. Visit [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov) for more information.

## What Foods Equal a Cup of Fruit?

- One measuring cup (8 oz) of any fresh, whole or cut-up fruit equals one cup.
- One-half cup of dried fruit is equal to one cup of fresh, frozen or canned fruit. One-quarter cup of dried fruit is equal to one-half cup of fruit.
- For more information what counts as a cup of different fruits, go to: [http://www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/fruits\\_counts.html](http://www.mypyramid.gov/pyramid/fruits_counts.html)



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## Tips to Help You Focus on Fruits

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### In general:

- Keep a bowl of whole fruit on the table, counter, or in the refrigerator.
- Buy fresh fruits in season when they may be less expensive and at their peak flavor.
- Buy fruits that are dried, frozen, and canned (in water or juice) as well as fresh, so that you always have a supply on hand.

### For the best nutritional value:

- Make most of your choices whole or cut-up fruit rather than juice, for the benefits dietary fiber provides.
- Select fruits with more potassium often, such as bananas, prunes and prune juice, dried peaches and apricots, cantaloupe, honeydew melon, and orange juice.

### At meals:

- At breakfast, top your cereal with bananas or peaches; add blueberries to pancakes; drink 100% orange or grapefruit juice. Or, try a fruit mixed with low-fat or fat-free yogurt.
- At lunch, pack a tangerine, banana, or grapes to eat, or choose fruits from a salad bar. Individual containers of fruits like peaches or applesauce are easy and convenient.
- At dinner, add crushed pineapple to coleslaw, or include mandarin oranges or grapes in a tossed salad.
- For dessert, have baked apples, pears, or a fruit salad.

### As snacks:

- Cut-up fruit makes a great snack. Either cut them yourself, or buy pre-cut packages of fruit pieces like pineapples or melons. Or, try whole fresh berries or grapes.
- Dried fruits also make a great snack. They are easy to carry and store well. Because they are dried,  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup is equivalent to  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of other fruits.
- As a snack, spread peanut butter on apple slices or top frozen yogurt with berries or slices of kiwi fruit.
- Frozen juice bars (100% juice) make healthy alternatives to high-fat snacks.

## GO, SLOW, WHOA Foods

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An easy way to make smart and nutritious choices within each food group is to use the “Go, Slow, Whoa” concept. **GO** foods are the most “nutrient dense.” **SLOW** foods are higher in calories, fat and sugar than **GO** foods. **WHOA** foods may be high in calories, fat and sugar and offer little nutritional value.

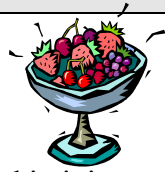
Food Group	<b>GO</b> Eat almost anytime, based on calorie needs	<b>SLOW</b> Eat sometimes, at most several times a week	<b>WHOA</b> Eat only once in a while or on special occasions
<b>Fruits</b>	All fresh, frozen, canned ( in juice)	100 % fruit juice; fruits canned in light syrup, dried fruits	Fruits canned in heavy syrup

Turn learn more about “Go, Slow Whoa Foods,” visit [www.nhlbi.nih.gov](http://www.nhlbi.nih.gov).

## Recipes That Focus on Fruits

### Crunchy Fruit Sundae

1/4 wedge cantaloupe  
 1 banana, peeled  
 3/4 cup watermelon chunks  
 1 kiwi, peeled  
 1/2 cup pineapple chunks, packed in juice



12 seedless grapes  
 1 medium pear  
 1 medium apple  
 2 whole graham cracker sheets, crushed  
 3/4 cup vanilla topping (recipe below)

1. Cut all fruit into bite-size pieces and place into a large bowl. Mix fruit together and spoon into 6 individual serving cups.
2. Top each serving with 2 tablespoons of Vanilla Topping.
3. Sprinkle crushed graham crackers on top.

**Makes 4 serving.** Per serving: 93 calories, 1 gm protein, 1 gm fat, 23 gm carbohydrate, 3 gm fiber, 0 mg cholesterol, 21 mg calcium, <1 mg iron, 16 mg sodium.

### Vanilla Topping

1/2 cup unsweetened applesauce  
 1 cup low fat vanilla yogurt

1/2 teaspoon cinnamon  
 1/8 teaspoon nutmeg

1. Place all ingredients in a mixing bowl and blend well. Cover and chill.

**Makes 6 servings.** Per Serving: 27 calories, <1 gm fat, 1 gm protein, 5 gm carbohydrate, 0 gm fiber, 1 mg cholesterol, 38 mg calcium, 0.11 mg iron, 14 mg sodium.

### Fruit Smoothies

1/2 cup frozen strawberries, slightly thawed  
 1 cup vanilla yogurt

1/2 cup orange juice  
 1 banana, sliced

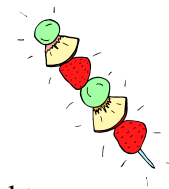
1. Combine ingredients in a mixing bowl.
2. Blend with a hand-held blender or regular blender.

**Makes 2 smoothies.** Per Serving: 211 calories, 7 gm protein, 1 gm fat, 46 gm carbohydrate, 3 gm fiber, 2 mg cholesterol, 235 mg calcium, 1 mg iron, 87 mg sodium.

### Fruit Kabobs

1 cup pineapple chunks, packed in juice  
 2 bananas  
 1/4 cup orange juice

12 strawberries  
 18 grapes  
 1/2 teaspoon cinnamon



1. Drain pineapple liquid into a small bowl.
2. Add orange juice and cinnamon to the liquid and mix.
3. Cut bananas into 6 pieces. Put banana pieces into the bowl with the juice and toss.
4. Wash the strawberries and grapes.
5. Build the kabobs by placing the fruit onto wooden skewers. Each skewer will have 2 banana chunks, 3 grapes, 3 or 4 pineapple chunks and 2 strawberries.

**Makes 6 Kabobs.** Nutrition Analysis: 75 calories, 1 gm protein, 5 gm fat, 19 gm carbohydrate, 2 gm fiber, 0 mg cholesterol, 13 mg calcium, <1 mg iron, 1 mg sodium.