

A MONTHLY HEALTHLETTER FROM THE WELLNESS COUNCIL OF AMERICA

WHY WOULD FRUITS & VEGGIES

MAKE US FEEL
GOOD?

Further study is needed to explain why eating fruits and veggies makes people feel good. A possible explanation is that fruits and veggies are rich in antioxidants. Antioxidants are substances that help counteract the damaging, but normal effects of aging. Antioxidants have also been linked with feelings of optimism. So which fruits and veggies pack the most powerful antioxidant punch? Choose from red berries, dark green veggies, sweet potatoes, and orange veggies, and reap the feel-good effects!



EAT RIGHT GET HAPPY

Yes, it's true. You really can eat your way to more happiness. In the first major study of its kind, researchers found that the more fruits and veggies we eat, the happier we are. For this study, published in the *American Journal of Public Health*, researchers followed the diets and psychological state of over 12,000 adults for up to seven years. The scientists ultimately found that even just one additional serving of fruits and veggies a day had a strong and measurable impact on positive well-being. What's more, the impact was almost immediate and continued to increase up to eight servings per day.

The lead researcher noted that going from almost no fruits and veggies to eight servings a day would boost life satisfaction on par with going from unemployment to employment. Wow!

👉 **Bottom line:** Eating more fruits and veggies cannot only boost your physical health but also your overall well-being and happiness.

ADD MORE FRUITS & VEGGIES!

Here are some super simple strategies to help you get to 7+ servings a day:

→ **Add fruit to your breakfast.** Bananas, berries, apples, oranges—practically any fruit pairs well with breakfast.

→ **Pile veggies on your sandwiches.** Add leafy greens, onions, tomatoes and/or sprouts (just to name a few) on your sandwiches for extra flavor and nutritional punch.

→ **If a recipe calls for veggies, add at least double.**

→ **Stock up on frozen fruits and veggies.** This way you don't have to worry about them spoiling and you'll have them on hand to add to smoothies, soups, stews, etc.

→ **Grab a fruit or veggie (instead of chips or candy) for your afternoon snack.** Pair it with some cheese, hummus or peanut butter to make it truly satisfying.

→ **Add them to baked goods.** Grate some carrots or zucchini or scoop dried cranberries or raisins into your next batch of baked goods to add another fruit serving to your day.

→ **Keep them visible.** If your fruit is in a bowl on the kitchen counter or chopped, ready-to-eat veggies are front and center in your fridge, you'll be much more likely to eat them.



- 1, 6 oz. can of Alaskan salmon
- 3 Tbsp finely chopped red onion
- 1 Tbsp capers
- 1½ cups fresh broccoli florets steamed in microwave until tender crisp (2 minutes), chopped
- ¼ cup crumbled feta cheese
- ⅓ cup golden raisins
- ¼ cup chopped toasted pecans
- 1 Tbsp canola mayonnaise
- 1 Tbsp country-style Dijon mustard
- 2 Tbsp plain non-fat Greek yogurt
- 1 tsp curry powder

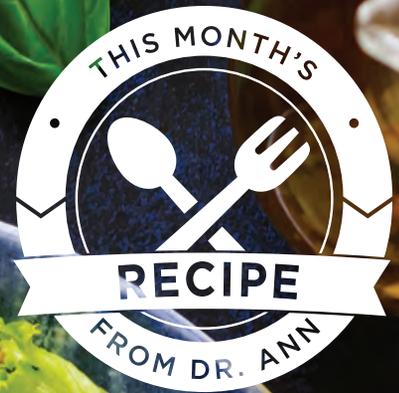
SALMON CURRIED SALAD WITH BROCCOLI AND RAISINS

DIRECTIONS

Combine all ingredients in a medium sized bowl and stir together until thoroughly blended.

Serve on a bed of lettuce with a side of whole grain tortilla chips.

SERVES: 2-3



Dr. Ann
WELLNESS

With formal training in nutrition and medicine, plus hands-on experience as a mother of four and family physician, Dr. Ann is a unique nutrition expert for the real world.

The whole food ingredients found in Dr. Ann's recipes are the right foods for health and vitality. Nutritional excellence naturally follows.

For more, visit DrAnnWellness.com.

SUPERSTAR FOOD OF THE MONTH: SALMON

Salmon is one of the healthiest protein packages on earth. This delectable fish is virtually exploding with almighty omega 3 fats along with several other vital nutrients, including magnesium, zinc, selenium, B vitamins, and vitamin D - think heart health, brain health, and diabetes protection. Wild salmon (always available canned!) is the best choice as it is one of the cleanest and most sustainable of all fish species.

PREVENT THE COLD & FLU GET ENOUGH VITAMIN D!

Want to cut your chances of getting a cold or flu? Make sure you're getting enough vitamin D! In the largest and most definitive evaluation to date, researchers found that taking a regular supplement of vitamin D reduced the risk of an upper respiratory infection substantially. The study combined the data from 25 clinical trials including over 10,000 study subjects from countries all over the world. For study subjects who had low levels of vitamin D to start, the risk of developing a respiratory infection was reduced by half. Those who already had higher baseline vitamin D blood levels benefited too, reducing their risk by about 10 percent. The researchers noted that optimal vitamin D levels are as protective against developing a respiratory infection as flu-vaccines protect against a flu-like illness.

Keep in mind that one of the best ways to get vitamin D is through sun exposure, which can prove difficult in the winter months. Getting sufficient vitamin D may also pose a challenge to many because very few foods naturally have vitamin D. For many adults, a vitamin D supplement may be

a good idea to ensure you're getting enough of this critical vitamin. The Institute of Medicine recommends that adults ages 19 to 70 get 600 IU a day. If you're older than 70, you need 800 IU a day. Talk with your healthcare provider about your vitamin D levels and follow their advice.

GET MORE D IN YOUR DIET

Fatty fish such as salmon, tuna and mackerel are among the best dietary sources of vitamin D. In fact, just one three-ounce serving of salmon would get you to your daily recommendation, with about 800 IUs. You can also find vitamin D in:

- Beef liver
- Egg yolks
- Mushrooms
- Fortified cereals, milk, orange juice and yogurt



Make sure you read the nutrition facts panel so you know how much vitamin D is provided in fortified foods.

According to findings published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* an estimated 40-75% of people are vitamin D deficient.



16 SIMPLE TIPS TO HELP HEALTHY HABITS STICK



COOL TOOLS!

HabitBull is a great app available for Android. It creates “habit streaks” that you won’t want to break. For iPhone users, the Way of Life app tracks habits in day-to-day charts, so it’s easy to visualize both the good and the bad.

1 Start with state of mind. Healthy change begins when you’re mentally ready for it. Take some time to think through your desired healthy habit—gather information, think about your options and map out how you might incorporate this new behavior in your life.

2 Understand the three elements of a habit. A habit consists of 3 parts: a trigger that reminds you to perform a habit, a routine (what you

automatically do) and a reward (the positive feeling you get). So if you want to eat healthier, your trigger could be the supermarket, where you automatically grab vegetables every time, and your reward is a feeling of pride that you have healthy items in your cart.

3 Aim for reasonable, lasting change as opposed to drastic moves. “Extreme challenges,” rigorous boot camps or strict diet cleanses may yield some quick

results, but they’re usually not realistic in the long-term. Consider behaviors that you’re likely to stick with over time.

4 Create stepping-stones. Set small goals that you can build on. This will help you adjust to the change and build confidence. For example, you could try walking for 5 minutes a day for a week. Then build up to 10. Over the next several weeks a 30-minute walk every day may likely become the automatic norm for you.

5 Tap into intrinsic motivation. Losing excess weight is a great goal, but what happens after you achieve it? Will you still be motivated to stick to your habit? Identify how a certain healthy behavior truly empowers and excites you. Knowing this will help you stick with the habit over the long haul.

6 Create shortcuts. Make healthy habits easier to follow by making it easier on yourself! Make a healthy breakfast the night before if you're always in a rush in the morning. Keep a pair of walking shoes and a change of clothes in your car at all times so you can work out whenever you have spare time.

7 Pair "indulgences" with a healthy habit. Watch your favorite show while you walk on the treadmill. Read a book or your favorite magazine while on an exercise bike. Have a small piece of chocolate if you've eaten fruits and veggies at every meal. The point is to associate activities you enjoy with your habit.

8 Recognize a habit wrecker when you see or say it. It's easy to justify breaking a good habit. You might find yourself saying, "I'll eat whatever I want today because I'm going to work out tomorrow" or "I'll catch up on sleep when I'm 80." Be aware of

the excuses you tell yourself and make sure that "just this once" doesn't ruin your healthy habit.

9 Go public. Tell others about your healthy habit or goal. Once others know, you'll be more inclined to stick with it, even if it's purely to save face!

10 Every Sunday review the week ahead and account for challenges. What in your schedule may cause you to break from your habit? Thinking about this before the week starts can help ensure you have time to plan and accommodate for your healthy behavior.

11 Take note of how you feel after the behavior. Do you feel happy? Tired? Frustrated? If you don't feel satisfied, evaluate what's causing the problem and try to troubleshoot. If you don't feel good about it, chances are you won't make it a habit.

12 Try to perform your habit daily. Consistency and repetitiveness are what helps make a behavior a habit. Whatever your desired habit is, try to do some form of it daily.

13 Maximize your time. You may be able to mix in healthy behaviors/habits into routine daily activities. For example, if you'd like to practice deep breathing try doing it in the shower or during your morning commute.

14 Identify and fill voids. If you've given up or reduced your soda intake, for example, make sure you're replacing that need/habit so you don't feel deprived. Have water with lemon handy or drink some tea when you would normally have soda to fill that void.

15 Rehearse the behavior in your head. Research shows that mental rehearsals and internal pep talks could actually improve your chances of sticking with a habit.

16 Acknowledge and celebrate achievements. Whether you hit a daily goal or cross off a major milestone, taking time to recognize and celebrate your achievements will fuel motivation and keep you on the right track.

→ REMEMBER
Talk with your doctor if you have any concerns about your health.





SPOTTY VISION?

A Closer Look at Eye Floaters

Drifting specks, strings, spots or cobwebs that float through your field of vision are known as eye floaters. These specks may be more intense or noticeable when you're looking at something bright like the sun or a computer screen. Although eye floaters might annoy you, they shouldn't interfere with your sight, and in most cases are harmless.

WHAT CAUSES EYE FLOATERS?

As we age, the thick, jelly-like substance that fills the center of the eye starts to form dense "blobs" of debris. Some of this debris may end up floating around and blocking some of the light coming into your eyes.

WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?

As their name implies, floaters quickly move around in your eye, and tend to disappear when you try to focus on them. Floaters can come in different shapes and colors. Here are some of the more common ones:

- Black or gray dots or blobs
- Squiggly lines
- Thin strands
- Cobwebs
- Rings

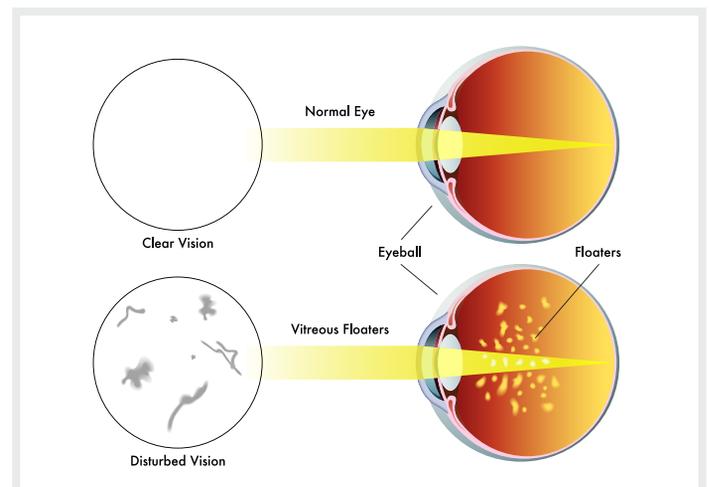
WHAT CAN I DO ABOUT THEM?

Once you experience eye floaters they usually don't go away (but in some cases they can). The good news is that you usually notice them less over time or they simply stop bothering you.

In extreme cases, surgery is an option. Doctors can perform a "vitrectomy" surgery in which the gel-like substance is removed from the back of the eye. This option is usually only performed if a person can't cope with floaters or can't see properly because of them.

SHOULD I SEE DOCTOR?

If eye floaters prohibit you from carrying out everyday activities or are interfering with vision you should see a doctor. One kind of floater, called the Weiss ring, is larger and can interfere with your vision more. Your doctor can examine you or refer you to a specialist who can recommend options. A more serious condition that can be confused with floaters is a detached or torn retina. If you're suffering from this, you may experience a sudden onslaught of floaters, flashing lights, or darkening vision. If that happens, you should immediately call your doctor. A detached or torn retina requires immediate diagnosis and treatment.



ONCE A WEEK WORKOUTS

...ARE THEY WORTH IT?

Health organizations like the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend that adults get at least two and a half hours of moderate aerobic activity (like brisk walking) or 75 minutes of vigorous activity (like running) every week. Many people break this time up, working out 30 minutes a day or even 2-3 shorter sessions throughout the day. However, there are some adults who may prefer to exercise with less frequency, but in longer duration, and a recent study reveals that this is indeed a worthwhile and beneficial option.

The study, published in the journal *JAMA Internal Medicine*, analyzed the exercise habits of nearly 64,000 adults and found that people had a 30 percent lower risk of dying during the study if they hit the recommended threshold of 150 minutes of moderate activity or 75 minutes of vigorous activity—regardless of whether those minutes were spread between one, two, or six workouts per week.

The researchers did note that if you opt to work out just once or twice a week that it needs to be somewhat intensive. They recommend doing at least 75 minutes of rigorous exercise or 150 minutes of moderate exercise (see the column below on what's considered vigorous and moderate).

What's Right for Me?

Since physical activity is so critical in protecting and maintaining our health, most experts recommend that you find the type of exercise, duration and intensity that works best for you. If you only have time for workouts on the weekend, aim to make that your routine. If you like working out daily for shorter periods of time, that's beneficial too. Bottom line: anything is better than nothing! Even if you can only work out once a week scientists have now confirmed that it indeed reaps benefits. So don't skip that one workout because you don't think it will make a difference!

WHAT'S MODERATE VS VIGOROUS?

When it comes to exercise, intensity refers to the amount of effort required to perform the activity. In other words, how hard you have to work to complete the activity.

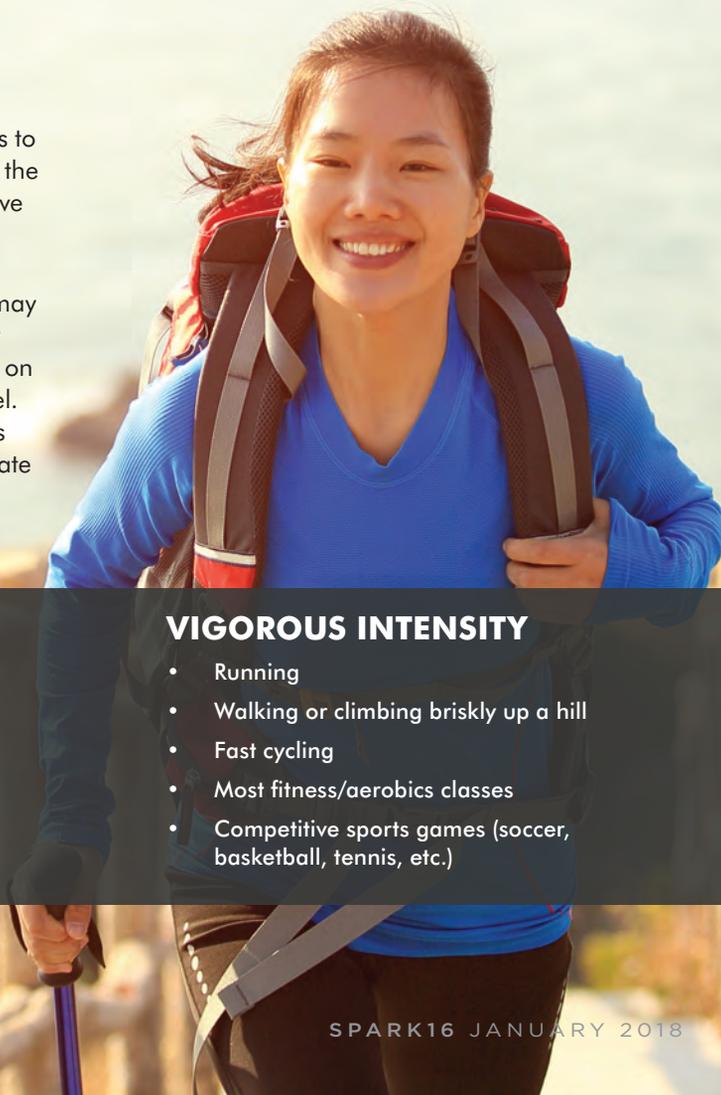
Intensity is different for everyone. What may be extremely intense for one person may not be intense for another. It all depends on one's exercise experience and fitness level. That being said, here are some examples as to what's generally considered moderate versus vigorous intensity.

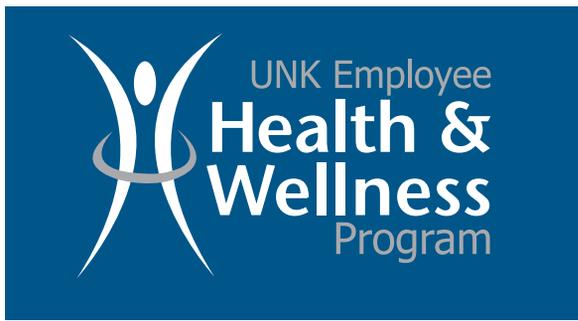
MODERATE INTENSITY

- Brisk Walking
- Dancing
- Gardening
- Housework
- Leisurely activities (golf, walking the dog, etc.)

VIGOROUS INTENSITY

- Running
- Walking or climbing briskly up a hill
- Fast cycling
- Most fitness/aerobics classes
- Competitive sports games (soccer, basketball, tennis, etc.)





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ADDITIONAL SERVING

One additional serving of fruits or veggies a day can have a strong and measurable impact on positive well-being.



40-75
PERCENT

According to findings published in the *Archives of Internal Medicine* an estimated 40-75% of people are vitamin D deficient.



150 OR 75
MINUTES

Adults should aim to get 150 minutes of moderate aerobic activity (like brisk walking) or 75 minutes of vigorous activity (like running) every week. This can be broken up throughout the week or done in a single workout.

WHAT ARE AMERICANS EATING?

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Americans are consuming more vegetables and fruit than in 1970, but the average U.S. diet still falls short of the recommendations in the 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans for these major food groups. Americans, on average, consumed more than the recommended amounts of meat, egg, and nuts and grains in 2015. Here are some other stats to chew on:

- » Americans consumed 48.3 pounds per person of potatoes and 28.3 pounds of tomatoes in 2015.
- » Just over 40 percent of potato consumption was frozen and 55 percent of tomato consumption was canned, as French fries and pizza sauce contribute to the high consumption of these two vegetables.
- » Americans consumed an average of 115.4 pounds of fresh and processed fruit per person in 2015, down from a high of 137.4 pounds in 1999.
- » Bananas (11.4 pounds per person) top the list of most popular fresh fruits while orange juice leads juice consumption at 23.7 pounds (2.7 gallons).



WHAT'S IN A NUMBER?

\$.75

One apple costs about 75 cents. Despite what many think, most fresh fruits and vegetables are very affordable. Plus science shows that even one serving of fruits or vegetables can have an immediate and positive effect on your well-being. That's a lot for your money!

BEST CHOICE

\$4

The average cost of a bag of chips. There are little to no health benefits of processed chips—not a great benefit for your money.

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