

## **Making Fruits and Veggies a Priority**

What if we ate more fruits and vegetables in our diet? What would the benefits be?

Getting enough fruits and vegetables in your diet is the single most important nutrition habit you can adopt for better health. Eating more fruits and vegetables can reduce your risk of obesity, heart disease, some cancers, diabetes, hypertension, and stroke while increasing energy and improving mood. Nutrition studies prove that higher consumption of fruits and vegetables automatically lowers the amount of fat in our diet.

### **Eating Fruits and Veggies**

- Provides nutrients like calcium, fiber, folate, iron, magnesium, potassium, vitamin A and vitamin C from your diet rather than taking vitamins.
- Are more convenient than you think. Grab a pack of carrots, snap peas, cut up cucumbers, an apple, banana, pear, cherry tomatoes or other fruit and veggies to take on the road for extra crunch and flavor.
- Provides more fiber and less trips to the doctor for irritable bowel syndrome (IBS), constipation, heartburn. Fiber makes you feel full, so you are likely to eat less, and take in less calories to prevent weight gain.
- Can be eaten in different forms: dried, cooked, raw, 100% juice, and canned, so you don't get bored.
- Naturally low in calories, higher in water and have zero cholesterol.
- You can grow them.
- They can be bought in season (best fresh and less expensive) or out of season (frozen and canned).
- You can have fun with them. You can kabob either fruit or veggies and have them with dip, load up a salad or on their own.

**Get started now! Here is a short list of fruits and veggies in season this fall, which means more flavor, better cost, and ideas for fall recipes:**

- **Fruits: pears, cherries, cranberries, plums, grapes, passion fruit, persimmon, pineapple, pomegranate.**
- **Vegetables: butternut, buttercup, acorn squash, broccoli, Brussel sprouts, butter lettuce, cauliflower, artichoke, jalapeno pepper, ginger, garlic, mushroom, lime, sweet potato, turnip**

### **The challenge this week is to: EAT THE RAINBOW!**

Your goal is to eat a variety of fruits and veggies each day. Track every fruit or vegetable you eat and the color. Try a new vegetable and remember raw, broiled, grilled, or steamed is best!