

Vegetables: Teacher Guide

Objective: To provide information on how to select and store vegetables and ways to add more vegetables to meal plans.

Sample ANCHOR questions for participants:

“What kinds of vegetables does your family like to eat?”

“What kinds of things influence your choice of vegetables?”

“What kinds of things influence your choice of vegetables for your family?”

“Where do you buy most of your vegetables?”

If during your discussion involving your ANCHOR questions your participants did not suggest topics they would like to learn about today you may want to ask:

“What kind of information would be useful to you or your family about vegetables?”

Background Information - Choose the appropriate information below to **ADD** to your lesson.

Vary your vegetable choices. Eat more **dark green and **orange** vegetables and legumes (dried beans, peas, and lentils).**

- Different vegetables are rich in different nutrients.
- Add vegetables of different colors to your meals each day.
- Examples of the five categories of vegetables:
 - Dark green – broccoli, kale, spinach, romaine, and greens
 - Orange – sweet potatoes, carrots, winter squash, and pumpkin
 - Legumes – lentils, dried beans, and dried peas
 - Starchy – white potatoes, corn, green peas, and jicama
 - Other – tomatoes, onions, green beans, and lettuce

All vegetables are good for you – fresh, canned or frozen.

Choose the vegetables you and/or your family members like best and those most economical.

- Buy fresh vegetables when in season. They cost less and taste great.
- Stock up on frozen and canned vegetables when they are on sale for quick and easy cooking.
- Buy “low sodium”, “less sodium”, and “No salt added” canned vegetables.
- Buy canned fruit packed in light syrup or 100% fruit juice. Drain fruit canned in syrup before eating to reduce sugar content.

Eat at least 2 1/2 cups* (5 servings) of vegetables every day.

A serving of vegetable is:

- 1/2 cup cooked or chopped raw vegetables
- 1/2 cup vegetable juice
- 1 cup raw leafy vegetables
- 1/2 cup cooked dried beans, peas, or lentils

*The recommendation of 2.5 cups of vegetables every day is based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Go to www.mypyramid.gov for personalized nutritional recommendations.

Most vegetables are good sources of fiber.

- For example, a half-cup serving of cooked dried beans has 4 to 10 grams of fiber.
- A healthy adult should have about 14 grams of fiber for every 1000 calories consumed each day.

Add vegetables to your diet.

- Combine vegetables with soups and casseroles.
- Have pre-cut vegetables (carrots, celery, etc.) in the refrigerator for easy snacking.
- Add chopped peppers, tomatoes, zucchini, onions and mushrooms to scrambled eggs.
- Top baked potato with chopped vegetables of choice, sprinkle with low fat cheese and microwave until cheese melts.
- Add frozen or canned vegetables to rice or pasta dishes during the last 5 to 10 minutes of cooking time.
- For a quick soup, combine tomato juice with chopped potatoes, celery, beans, corn and peas. Heat in microwave or on the stove until vegetables are cooked.
- Top sandwiches or burgers with lettuce and tomato.
- Add chopped vegetables to your salads.

Keep It Safe.

- Clean fresh vegetables before preparing or eating them. Rinse vegetables under clean running water and rub briskly with hands.
- Store fresh vegetables away from raw meat, poultry and seafood while shopping, preparing, or storing.
- Store canned foods in a cool, dry place.
- Store canned tomatoes and fruit up to 18 months; canned meat and vegetables 2 to 5 years.
- Never use or taste food from containers that are leaking, bulging, or badly dented cans; cracked jars or jars with loose or bulging lids; canned food with a foul odor; or any container that spurts liquid when opening.

Activities (APPLY)

1. **Count up your servings.** Begin by asking participants to think about the food they ate yesterday. **“Think about dinner you ate, did you eat any vegetables”?** Ask the participants which vegetables they ate. Go through lunch, breakfast and snacks the same way.
2. **“If you do not eat a variety of vegetables or several servings each day let’s talk about how to eat more vegetables and a greater variety of vegetables.”** Find out why individuals don’t eat **vegetables** or several servings each day. As a group, brainstorm solutions to help those individuals eat more **vegetables**. For example, if the cost of fresh **vegetables** is a concern suggest canned **vegetables**. **They** are very nutritious and often cheaper than fresh or frozen **vegetables**.
3. **Vegetable Scramble**
4. **Vegetable Puzzle**

Handouts (AWAY materials):

Herbs & Spices for Vegetables
Fall Fruit & Veggie Recipes
Make Healthy Changes to Your Diet
How to Eat More Fruits & Vegetables

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