

Helping Your Kids Fill Up on Fruits and Veggies

- **Make more seem like less.** Five servings or more each day sounds like a lot unless you divide them up throughout the meals and snacks of the day. Serve one at breakfast (a whole orange), two at lunch (carrot sticks and bell pepper slices), two as a snack (apple, banana, or berries), and two at dinner (a salad and a baked sweet potato). That equals more than five!
- **Bring out the cook in you.** Get your child involved with the shopping and preparation of fruits and vegetables for your family. Ask your child to arrange a fruit plate for dessert or a vegetable tray for a party. The more your child helps in the preparation, the more likely he will be to eat it.
- **Dip it, dunk it.** Fruits and vegetables taste better to kids when combined with dips and dressings made with healthy fat (e.g., olive oil, canola oil) or with plain yogurt.
- **Serve crunchy munchies.** Raw produce is a great way to help your child get five servings. Instead of serving junk food at snack time, serve the kids crunchy munchies—apples, pears, carrots, broccoli, celery, and cucumbers, among others.
- **Explore the unknown.** Many children are afraid to try new fruits and vegetables. Offer them a wide variety of fruits and vegetables at an early age. Keep offering those fruits and vegetables to help prevent later dislikes.
- **Set an example.** Children model what they see their parents and teachers do. If their parents and teachers eat plenty of colorful fruits and vegetables, children will be more likely to eat them as well.
- **Gimme more.** Serve up a few vegetables at dinner—a couple that the kids are familiar with and one or two that are new.
- **Proclaim the benefits.** Tell the kids how eating fruits and vegetables will make them look and feel better. Eating five or more servings each day helps keep the heart healthy!
- **Masquerade your mango.** Turn disgust into delicious with a disguise. Smell, color, and texture are three important qualities that can turn kids on or off to fruits and vegetables.
- **Combine fruits and vegetables with the kids' favorite foods.** For instance, drizzle a small amount of melted cheese on top of cauliflower or peanut sauce on top of steamed broccoli.

From L.W.Y. Cheung, H. Dart, S. Kalin, B. Otis, and S.L. Gortmaker, 2016, *Eat Well & Keep Moving*, 3rd ed. (Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics).