

# Eating your Fruits & Veggies

Studies have found that those who eat 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day are at a much lower risk of getting cancer and other diseases according to the National Cancer Institute (NCI) and the Produce for Better Health Foundation.

The **5 A Day for Better Health Program** aims to encourage people to increase their consumption of fruits and vegetables to 5 to 9 servings a day.

## *A serving size includes:*

- A medium-sized piece of fruit
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup of fruit or vegetable juice
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cooked or canned vegetables or fruit
- One cup raw, leafy vegetables
- $\frac{1}{2}$  cup cooked dry peas or beans
- $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of dried fruit

*Join the challenge to eat your fruits and vegetables every week!*

Remember to get at least 5 servings a day.

	1	2	3	4	5!
Sun.					
Mon.					
Tue.					
Wed.					
Thur.					
Fri.					
Sat.					

Learn more and grow your own garden by visiting [www.extension.umn.edu/yard-and-garden](http://www.extension.umn.edu/yard-and-garden)

## Food Sustainability: Leading to a Healthier Body & Mind



## Finding Your Greenthumb

An easy and fun way to add fruits and vegetables into your life is to start your very own garden! Gardening is great for any age and getting started is easy! You may be surprised to find just how accessible gardening is!

## Supplies

Depending on the size of your garden you may want more or fewer tools. Here are a few basics to get you started.

- **Dirt** - use a patio planter, backyard garden, community garden, or raised garden bed
- **Trowel** - a small handheld shovel
- **Shovel** - for larger digging projects
- **Watering can or hose**

*For added luxury and comfort in the garden, you can also use these tools:*

- Gardening gloves
- Kneeling pad
- Sprinkler

## WHAT SHOULD I PLANT?

In Minnesota the weather and soil can be unpredictable. We suggest starting with these vegetables which are known to be resilient in Minnesota weather.

Eggplant

Broccoli

Brussel Sprouts





Peppers

Cauliflower

Cabbage

## GARDENING 101





Here are some tips to ensure you're getting the most out of your garden:

-  Ensure the soil isn't too wet or too dry. When the soil is just right it will crumble into small clumps
-  Enhance the soil to include 2 parts soil, 1 part sand, and 1 part organic matter
-  Sow 2 - 3 seeds about ¼ inch below the top and gently water your seeds
-  Water daily, usually about 1" of water per week

You can also start your garden by planting indoors using plastic trays or cups that are 3 - 4 inches deep.

## Benefits to Gardening:

Gardening has lots of health benefits to help reduce your risk of cancer.

-  Fresh produce that is so good for you! Research at the Masonic Cancer Center shows that cruciferous vegetables like Brussel Sprouts, Cabbage, and Watercress have been linked to decrease cancer development!
-  Save money from purchasing produce from the stores - plus it's as local as it gets!
-  It's the gift that keeps on giving! Plant perennial vegetables like asparagus, broccoli, sweet potatoes, or fruits like strawberries and raspberries so they'll come back year after year.
-  The act of gardening is a mood booster and is linked to decreasing cortisol, "the stress hormone" which is linked to better memory and higher self esteem!
-  Great source of exercise. Moderate intensity exercise like gardening reduces are linked to lower risks of several cancers and reduces your risk of heart attack and stroke.
-  Exposes you to vitamin D which helps keep our bones strong and immune system healthy to fight off colds and the flu!

Every fruit and vegetable has different benefits and eating them, along with lowering fats and cholesterol from your diet, can really improve your health. Remember to eat a variety of fruits and vegetables of all different colors. **Challenge yourself to something new every week!**