

More Ways to Get More Fruits and Veggies in Your Diet

By www.rawfooddietpower.com

When you think of the word “dessert” what comes to mind?

More than likely you immediately think of pies, cakes, cookies - all the unhealthy things that most people associate with the word desserts. But did you know there are healthier versions available? And healthier doesn't mean boring and bland! Things like fruit desserts can be healthy, full of flavor and a great way to help ensure that you and your family are getting more fruits in your daily diet!

What exactly do these desserts have to do with getting more fruits into your daily diet?

First, if you have a hard time getting picky eaters to snack on plain fruit, these desserts offer a delicious flavorful alternative to eating it plain. Sometimes all it takes to get a picky kid to eat fruit is to add it to something else and label it a dessert. After all what kid doesn't like dessert? And two, sometimes eating fruit is just plain ole boring and fruit desserts add enough variety and more flavor to 'spice' things up.

Want to try it on your own kids? Here are three quick and easy fruit desserts that are healthy and packed full of flavor and are sure to have your family asking for more! And the best thing is, you can give them more knowing it's healthy and helping them get more of the vitamins and minerals they need that fruit provides.

[Fruit Dessert Recipes](#)

Strawberry Frozen Yogurt

(Makes about 4 servings)

1/2 cup sugar
1 package (16 ounces) unsweetened strawberries
1/2 cup plain nonfat yogurt
1 Tbsp. lemon juice

In a food processor, add the sugar and strawberries. Pulse until chopped coarsely. Slowly add the yogurt and lemon juice with the food processor still running. Process until smooth and serve immediately.

Banana Bites

1/4 cup chocolate chips
1/4 cup peanut butter

2 large bananas
Coconut flakes

Tear a decent sized piece of wax paper off and put on counter top (or working surface). Cut bananas into bit sized chunks. Heat the peanut butter and chocolate chips in microwave (about 1 minute). Dip banana pieces until well coated. Sprinkle coconut flakes on them and let harden (about 1 hour).

Broiled Pineapple

1/2 lb. pineapple
Nonstick cooking spray

While preheating oven, coat broiler pan with nonstick cooking spray. Core pineapple and cut wedges lengthwise to make 8 spears. Put pineapple spears on broiler pan and cook for 20-25 minutes or until golden brown and tender. You can even serve this with a dollop of vanilla ice cream if you wish.

As you can see, from the three recipes shared, fruit desserts are a quick and easy way to ensure that you and your family are adding more fruits to your diet. Another way, not mentioned in the recipes above, to make a fruit dessert is as simple as putting some berries in a bowl and adding some cool whip on top.

Eat More Fruits And Vegetables With These Three Secrets Strategies

When it comes to healthy eating and snacking it's all about convenience and having things readily available. These three secrets will help encourage you and your family to eat more fruits and vegetables. So, let's jump right in.

Secret #1 - Buy Prepackaged

One of the biggest reasons people say they don't eat more fruits and vegetables is because they don't have the time to prepare them. That's really not an acceptable excuse anymore because today you can just about buy anything, including fruits and vegetables, in prepackaged, ready to go servings/containers. This option will cost you a bit more because you're paying for convenience but if you truly don't have the time, this is a great way to make sure you have access to fruits and vegetables quickly and easily.

Secret #2 - Prepare ahead of time

If you don't like secret #1 because you don't want to spend the extra money to buy convenience and face it, you will pay more for the convenience of prepackaged, ready to go items then this secret is for you. In this case, you're going to buy a bunch of fruits and veggies but instead of putting everything away when you get home, you're going to immediately take action.

Meaning, for the veggies you're going to wash, cut and put in individual sized snack bags or easy to access containers see through Tupperware type containers work great so that when you do want to snack, it will already be cut up and ready for you. For fruit, if you bought something like a pineapple for example, take the time now to prepare it so when you do want it, it will be ready. It might take a bit of time to do this all at once, but it will be worth it in the long run when you and your family can just go the fridge and grab a healthy snack that's already prepared.

Secret #3 - Place a fruit bowl on the counter or in the middle of the table

This secret works better for fruit than it does for vegetables but there are some vegetables you could do this with as well. Putting a bowl of fruit in the center of the table or out on the countertop where it is easily seen and easily accessible, makes it more likely that you and your family will grab it to snack on. Think about the old saying out of sight, out of mind. It's true. If you can't see the fruit, you're less likely to reach for it. Make it easy on yourself and your family and place it where you'll see it as soon as you walk into the kitchen.

As you can see these three secrets are an easy way to encourage you and your family to eat more fruits and veggies - something that most of us need to start doing!

Have Fun Experimenting With Exotic Vegetables

If you find that you're getting tired of the same ole vegetables over and over then it's time to start thinking of different ways to introduce new ones into your diet. One of the ways to do this is to start experimenting with exotic vegetables. Thankfully it's much easier these days to have access to some of the exotic vegetables that you used to only find in upper class (aka expensive) restaurants.

Exotic vegetables are a fun way to add new color, texture and flavor to your dishes. You can jazz up existing recipes with these or create new recipes to add to your diet.

Now, let's take a look at a list of vegetables that are considered exotic. Some you may have been lucky enough to try – and love. But some will no doubt be new to you and your family.

- Asparagus
- Bok Choy
- Black radish
- Beansprouts
- Chillis
- Daikon
- Kohlrabi
- Yams
- Pak choi
- Plantain
- Purple Cauliflower

- Okra
- Shiitake mushrooms
- Fennel
- Zucchini
- Endives
- Leeks
- Parsnips

Now that you have a better idea of what an exotic vegetable is let's talk about ways you can use them to add more vegetables to your diet. Because if you're like a vast majority of the world, you don't come close to consuming the recommended 5 servings a day of vegetables (and fruits) and need to find a way to increase your intake.

If you want one recipe that gives you the best bang for your buck in terms of consuming a large amount of vegetables in one sitting, this recipe is perfect.

Exotic Roasted Veggies

1/4 cup parsnips
 1/4 cup red and yellow peppers
 1/4 cup black radish
 1/4 cup turnips
 1/4 cup purple cauliflower
 Salt, to taste
 Pepper, to taste
 2 Tbsp. olive oil

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. While oven is preheating, cut all vegetables and place in a bowl. Add the salt, pepper and olive oil. Toss well. Place the vegetables on a baking sheet lined with tin foil, cover and bake for 20 minutes. Uncover and roast for an additional 20 minutes. Serve immediately.

If you're looking for a resource where you can find a bunch of exotic vegetable recipes, check out <http://www.yummly.com/recipes/exotic-vegetables>. You'll find recipes like Exotic Mushroom and Walnut Pate, Maduros with Mint Mojo Fried Ripe Plantains with Garlic and Mint Sauce, Plantain Chips, Cactus Casserole and many more!

One thing to keep in mind when it comes to exotic vegetables. While they are a fun way to add new color, texture and flavors to your diet, some of them may not be available in your area. You'll have to do some research and check out produce aisles at different stores to see what you can find. An alternative would be to grow your own but that's a whole different article.

More Fun Vegetable Experiments: Trying Different Preparation Methods

Let's face it, sometimes vegetables are boring and you get sick of eating them the same way over and over and over. You can jazz up dinner time by changing out those old, tired vegetable prep methods for something new.

1. Grilling

Grilling is a great way to put a new spin on eating vegetables. It gives that outdoor cooked special flavor that only grilling provides. The biggest obstacle to grilling vegetables is that it's not always convenient to get to a grill. If for example you live somewhere that gets a lot of snow during the winter, you're probably not going to be doing any grilling. But once the weather warms up, you can enjoy grilled vegetables all you want.

2. Blanching

Blanching isn't something that many people are familiar with. In case you're not, blanching is where you briefly cook vegetables and then chill them in cold water before freezing. When the vegetable is submerged into the cold water, it stops the cooking method. Food is blanched for a few different reasons, usually to whiten it or soften it.

3. Sautéing

This is probably one of the easiest and quickest ways to add a new spin to preparing vegetables. When you sauté vegetables it's simply a matter of cooking them quickly over extremely high heat in an oil that can handle the high heat.

Sautéing vegetables is a good way to eat them because they are cooked so quickly that they retain almost all of their nutrients and a lot of their flavor.

One thing to be aware of: because the vegetables cook so fast and it's over such high heat you have to keep a very close eye on it so it doesn't burn.

4. Braising

This method is similar to steaming or boiling but the big difference is that when braising vegetables, you don't put them completely in water when cooking. Instead, only enough water is added to cover about half the vegetables.

5. Roasting

This is the technique that takes the longest but the flavor of the vegetables makes it worth the wait. Add different oils and seasonings before roasting to add even more flavor. Roasting vegetables creates what is known as a caramelized effect. It's something you really need to experience for yourself because it's hard to put into words what that tastes like. The next time you are ready to prepare some vegetables, I encourage you to give this technique a shot. I think you'll be pleasantly surprised at the flavor it produces!

Now that you have finished reading this article, you have five different techniques to help bring new life to the boring ole normal way of eating fresh vegetables.

Get Picky Eaters To Snack On Fruits and Vegetables With These Flavorful Dips

Dipping your fruits and vegetables is an easy way to get the pickiest kid (or adult!) to snack on something healthy. And while fresh fruit is often sweet and yummy enough to eat on its own, there are times that eating it plain is just boring and it calls for a little variation, a little 'spicing' up. That's where fruit dip comes in. But first let's take a look at some of the fruits that are perfect for dipping.

Fruit made for dipping:

- Bananas
- Strawberries
- Grapes
- Pineapple
- Oranges
- Cantaloupe
- Muskmelon
- Kiwi fruit
- Blueberries

Ingredients perfect for fruit dip:

- Chocolate
- Yogurt
- Cool whip
- Marshmallow Cream
- Nutella
- Cream cheese
- Caramel

And here are a couple fruit dip recipes to get you started!

Strawberry Yogurt Dip

1 cup strawberries
Sugar, to taste
3/4 cup yogurt, plain
1/4 tsp. vanilla
1/2 cup cream

In a small mixing bowl, whip the cream until a peak forms. Now add the remaining ingredients and whip until smooth. Serve immediately or refrigerate until ready to serve.

Marshmallow Cream Dip

7 ounces marshmallow cream
3 ounces cream cheese
8 ounces whipped topping, thawed

Mix all ingredients until well blended. Serve chilled.

Ok, now let's move onto fresh vegetables and dipping ideas for those. Just as mentioned above, vegetables are also often yummy enough to eat on their own but sometimes they need a little 'spicing' up too. Below you will find a list of veggies great for dipping, some dip ideas and two vegetable dip recipes.

Fresh vegetables perfect for dipping:

- Carrots
- Cucumbers
- Peppers - red, yellow, green, orange
- Cauliflower
- Broccoli
- Radishes
- Asparagus
- Zucchini

Here are a few ideas for vegetable dips:

- Hummus
- Ranch
- Plain vanilla yogurt
- Sour Cream
- Dill dip
- Guacamole
- Salsa
- Balsamic vinaigrette
- Cottage cheese

These are just a few of the things you can use to dip your veggies in. There are a lot of yogurt based dip recipes out there as well as recipes that use sour cream. Do a Google search for vegetable dip recipes and you'll find a lot. But to get you started here are a couple quick and easy ones:

Ranch Veggie Dip

8 ounces cream cheese, softened
16 ounces sour cream
2 packages ranch salad dressing mix

In a medium sized mixing bowl, mix together all the ingredients until smooth. Serve immediately or refrigerate until ready to serve.

Greek Yogurt Veggie Dip

1/2 tsp. paprika
1/2 tsp. garlic salt
1 tsp. dill weed, dried
2 Tbsp. parsley
1 container Greek Yogurt (17.6 ounces)

In a medium mixing bowl add all ingredients and mix until blended well. Serve immediately or place in refrigerator until ready to serve.

The next time you hear "I don't like it" or "I don't want any" when you mention snacking on fruits or vegetables, use the suggestions in this article to get your little one (or big one) to snack away.

How To Encourage Kids To Love Veggies: Plant A Family Garden

As parents we want to raise our kids to eat healthy. It's even more important to instill healthy eating habits in our kids in this day and age where there is so much fast food and junk readily available for them to get their hands on. While we can't shelter them from it all, we can control what they eat at home.

But what happens if you have picky eaters who turn their nose up at the mere mention of vegetables? How can you get them to eat and even like vegetables without World War 3 breaking out in your home?

One of the ways to do this is by planting a garden and letting them be involved in the entire process. It's a fun way for them to learn how vegetables grow which will make them interested and curious about them and what they taste like.

Once you make the decision to plant a garden, if you can, designate a small section just for them. And then in this area, let them experiment. Let them choose what they want to grow and then help them develop their gardening skills. There are so many learning opportunities here - responsibility being the main one - and it's also a great way to grow closer as a family because you'll be spending a lot of time side by side tending to the garden.

Another way to encourage kids to learn to love veggies is in their designated garden area plant things like carrots, radishes, snap peas and cucumbers so that they can grab them once they're grown and snack on them right then and there. (A word of caution - for younger kids, you may need to supervise so that if there are other things growing like cherry tomatoes where the leaves are poisonous they don't accidentally eat something they shouldn't.

The great thing about a garden is that you can experiment with different types of things to grow. And you can help your kids learn which items grow better in your climate and the environment you live in.

By allowing your kids to be a part of the gardening process it will help them be more interested in vegetables and healthy eating. Giving them the freedom to pick a snack right out of the garden again, don't forget to supervise the little ones if need be is a great way to get them to like their vegetables and want them more.

If you live in an area that doesn't allow you the freedom to have a garden, there are things you can do like windowsill gardens, etc. Do some research and figure out what suits your family's needs best and then get started. The sooner you can start teaching your kids about gardening and healthy eating, the greater chance they'll learn to love their veggies.

Skip The Bread And Substitute With Vegetables Instead

Sandwiches are a quick and easy go to for a lunch or dinner when you don't have a lot of time to prepare anything else. Unfortunately there are a lot of different reasons - from Gluten intolerance to white bread being bad for you, etc - that you should skip the bread. But if the bread is the staple of a sandwich, how can you still enjoy a favorite meal without it?

It's easy when you know have these tricks up your sleeve.

Trick #1 - Use Lettuce

Yes, you read that right. Lettuce is a great alternative to bread when you really want a sandwich. Romaine lettuce or other large leafy greens like cabbage, Bibb lettuce or red lettuce work best because they're full of more nutrients than iceberg lettuce, for example. And they also tend to be a bit sturdier and won't fall apart so easily.

Here are just a few suggestions of ingredients you can use to create a lettuce sandwich:

- Any type vegetarian lunchmeat (meat free)
- Vegan Cheese (dairy free)
- Tomato
- Onion
- Anything you can think of

Trick #2 - Use Cucumbers

This trick takes a little bit of time but I promise you, it's worth it. In order for this one to work, you need to cut the cucumber in half lengthwise and then hollow it out. The reason you need to hollow it out is because that's where you're going to stack your sandwich ingredients. The same ingredients mentioned above work perfect in this case too.

And here are a few more ways you can create delicious breadless sandwiches. A couple of these ideas - banana Nutella sandwich and peanut butter, chocolate chip and apple sandwich - are the perfect snack for a picky eater who often makes a face at the mention of fruit or vegetables.

- Banana Nutella Sandwich
- Peanut Butter, Chocolate Chip and Apple Sandwich
- Lettuce Wrap Tacos
- Red pepper sandwich (use the red peppers as bread)

There you have it, two quick and easy tricks to help you skip the bread and create a healthier sandwich alternative. Get creative and see all the different ways you can come up with to skip the bread and instead get more fruits and vegetables into your diet.

Smoothies: A Quick and Easy Way to Add More Fruits and Veggies to Your Diet

If you are looking for a way to add more fruits and veggies to your diet, smoothies are one of the quickest and easiest ways to do it. And the great thing about them is that you can get as creative as you want - adding this and that - coming up with unique tastes to suit you and your family. But if you don't feel comfortable just 'winging' it and creating your own, look online for recipes - you'll find lots to choose from.

Using smoothies as a way to add more fruits and vegetables into your diet is also great because some people don't like the texture or taste of certain vegetables, for example spinach, but they find that mixing it in a smoothie is delicious.

Another benefit of smoothies is that if you have picky kids who make faces at just the mention of fruits and veggies, you can ensure that they're getting more of them by 'sneaking' them into a smoothie. Because the flavors all blend together, they'll never even know they drank something they didn't like.

Now that we've touched on the benefits, let's take a look at some of the fruits and vegetables you can use in a smoothie.

- Spinach
- Lettuce
- Tomatoes
- Cucumber

- Carrots
- Kale
- Strawberries
- Bananas
- Pineapple
- Plums
- Peaches
- Nectarines
- Kiwi

This is definitely not an exhaustive list of the fruits and vegetables you can use in smoothies. It's just some of the basic ones to give you an idea of what you can use. You should also get creative and experiment with some exotic fruits and vegetables such as papaya, mango, and beets.

There are a few things you should keep in mind when creating smoothies. Let's take a look at those now.

1. Avoid fruit juices - instead use things like water, milk, coconut water, etc for your liquid. Fruit juices add a lot of unwanted calories.

2. Preparation of fruits and vegetables - if you want your smoothie to be a smoother consistency, chop/dice them as small as possible.

And in case you need a recipe to help get you started, the one below is a nice combination of a fruit and vegetable combination smoothie.

Strawberry Kale Smoothie Recipe

Couple handfuls of strawberries (frozen or fresh)

1-2 cups chopped kale

1/2 cup soy milk

1 tablespoon flax seeds

Place all ingredients in a blender and blend on high until desired consistency is reached.

There you have it, an overview of how quickly and easily you can add more fruits and vegetables into your diet simply by adding them to a smoothie. Try drinking a smoothie every morning for breakfast or replace one snack a day with a smoothie to help guarantee you'll get more of the fruits and vegetables you need in your daily diet.

The Secret Behind Meatless Mondays

The Meatless Monday concept has been around since 2003, according to Wikipedia (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Meatless_Monday), when it was founded by marketing professional Sid Lerner. And it's getting bigger and bigger as time goes on, with more and more people embracing it including hospitals, schools, restaurants and households around the world!

According to Wikipedia Meatless Mondays means:

An international campaign that encourages people to not eat meat on Mondays to improve their health and the health of the planet.

While this article doesn't have anything to do with Meatless Mondays' premise to improve the health of the planet by going meatless, it does focus on improving health by going meatless. And we're going to take it one step further and talk about how going meatless one day a week can be a great way to add more fruits and vegetables into your diet. So, let's jump right in and get to the...well, the 'meat' of this article.

Going meatless one day a week gives you the perfect opportunity to add in some extra fruits and veggies to your diet which are essential because they provide antioxidants, vitamins and minerals your body needs. And if you're anything like many other people out there, you don't come close to eating the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables so finding ways to sneak some extras in is important.

When choosing fruits and vegetables to add to your Meatless Monday meals be sure and choose a variety of them so you have a range of different textures and colors which aides in helping your body get all those different vitamins and minerals.

To give you an idea of what a Meatless Monday recipe looks like, here is one for your convenience. It's not only quick and easy to make, but sneaks in a serving of vegetables.

Potato, Cabbage and Carrot Medley

- 1/3 cup olive oil
- 1 onion, thinly sliced
- 1 Tbsp. garlic, minced
- 8 potatoes, cut into quarters
- 1/2 tsp. pepper
- 1 tsp. salt
- 1/4 tsp. cinnamon
- 1/2 tsp. cumin
- 2 large carrots, thinly sliced
- 4 cups cabbage, shredded
- 1 tsp. lemon juice

Over medium heat, heat the olive oil and then add the onion, garlic and potatoes. Cook for 8-10 minutes. Now add the pepper, salt, cinnamon, cumin and carrots. Sauté for 8-10 minutes,

stirring occasionally. Now add the cabbage and sauté for another 8-10 minutes. Now add the lemon juice and stir well. You can serve as is or serve with a slice of bread.

If you need a resource for more meatless recipes, you will find a bunch here <http://www.meatlessmonday.com/favorite-recipes/>. You can also do a Google search and find many more to choose from.

Now that you know the secret behind Meatless Mondays and how it can help you add more fruits and vegetables to your diet, take this opportunity to start eating healthier – at least one day per week. Get creative and see what kind of recipes you can come up with that use a wide variety of different fruits and vegetables.

Vegetable Soup As An Appetizer – An Easy Way to Eat Fewer Calories and Get Your Veggies In!

If you are like most people in the US, you aren't getting enough fruits and vegetables in your diet. The recommended daily serving is at least five! With the hustle and bustle of busy lives and access to so much fast food and convenience foods, it's no wonder people aren't eating enough of them. But that's no excuse. You should still make a conscious decision to do what you can to ensure that you're eating more fruits and vegetables.

Another reason so many people don't eat more vegetables is because they don't like eating them plain. Whether it's the texture or the taste, plain vegetables just aren't an option for some so instead they skip them altogether. That's the great thing about vegetable soup, though - it makes eating vegetables easier because they're combined with a broth and plenty of seasonings.

Not only is starting your meal with vegetable soup a good way to eat more vegetables, it also prevents you from over indulging on higher calorie foods when the main meal is served because the liquid (broth) and fiber rich vegetables make you feel full quicker. Research has even shown that those who start a meal by eating soup first, actually consume 20% less calories than those who don't!

Below is a quick and easy very basic vegetable soup that is packed full of flavor and only takes about 30 minutes to cook.

Basic Vegetable Soup

- 1 cup whole kernel corn
- 14 ounces gouma vegetable broth
- 14.5 ounces diced tomatoes
- 1 cup green beans
- 11.5 ounces tomato vegetable juice
- 1 cup water
- 1 diced potato

2 diced celery stalks
2 sliced carrots
Salt, to taste
Pepper, to taste

In a large pot, add all ingredients and bring to a boil. Turn heat down and simmer for 30 minutes or until vegetables are tender.

The great thing about vegetable soup is you can add as many or as few vegetables as you like. Of course if the idea is to eat more vegetables, then you'll obviously want to go with adding more instead of less.

If you want an easy way to not only add more vegetables to your diet, but to also help prevent overindulging on higher calorie foods, try starting your meal off with a bowl of hearty vegetable soup. You might just find you come to enjoy the added dose of goodness!

We hope that you have enjoyed this free ebook.

By www.rawfooddietpower.com