

Shopping for Healthy Options at the Grocery Store

Becky Varner, R.D./L.D from Uptown Grocery & Kaylie Stogsdill, OU FIT Wellness Coordinator

When grocery shopping, think of your cart as your plate for dinner/lunch. You should fill half your cart with fruits and vegetables, then ¼ grains and ¼ protein. This will help you buy things that will meet nutritional recommendations and prevent you from filling your cart with less nutritional food items

Phytonutrients: What are they and what foods contain them?

- Phytonutrients are found in plants: Fruits/Vegetables that have many health benefits like depending on the phytonutrients you consume.
 - They can help benefit eye health, natural consumption of estrogen, act as an antioxidant to reduce inflammation, and may reduce risks of cancer.
- Fruits and vegetables are concentrated sources of phytonutrients; other plant foods like whole grains, legumes/beans, nuts and seeds, and herbs and spices also contain phytonutrients.
- Food rich in Flavonoids: Blueberries, blackberries and red cabbage
- Food rich in beta-carotene: carrots, winter squash, papaya and melon
- Food rich in lycopene: tomatoes, guava and watermelon
- Food rich in chlorophyll: Kale, spinach, and collard greens

Fruits

- Minimum Daily Recommendation for Fruit: Men and Women 2 cups (may vary with age).
 - These are the minimum recommendations for individuals that get less than 30 minutes per day of moderate physical activity. Those who are more active can consume more within their calorie needs.
- **What foods are in the fruit food group?**
 - Any fruit or 100% fruit juice counts as part of the Fruit Group. Fruits may be fresh, canned, frozen, or dried, and may be whole, cut-up, or pureed.
 - *Food for Thought:* 100% fruit juice is still a good source of concentrated fruit but, you are not getting all of the fiber and phytonutrients from it like you would eating it whole.
 - When shopping get a variety of fruits and try something new!
 - Examples of fruits: Passion fruit, oranges, bananas, kiwis, red cactus pear, pineapples, etc.

Vegetables

- Minimum Daily Recommendation for Vegetables: Men 2.5-3 cups and Women 2-2.5 cups (may vary with age)
 - These are the minimum recommendations for individuals that get less than 30 minutes per day of moderate physical activity. Those who are more active can consume more within their calorie needs.
- **What food are in the Vegetable group?**
 - Just like fruits, they can be 100% vegetable juice or any vegetable. They can be raw, frozen, canned, dried/dehydrated, etc.
 - Vegetable Examples: Legumes, beans, peas, carrots, cabbage, bell pepper, cauliflower, etc.
- **Vegetables are good!**
 - They contain a variety of health benefits just like fruits.
 - They are typically low in fat and calories and none have cholesterol.
 - Having a vegetable rich diet may help reduce the risk for heart disease too!
 - Vegetables are also a great source of fiber.
- **Beans & Peas**
 - Beans and peas considered to be part of the vegetable group.
 - They are an excellent source of protein from plants
 - Beans and peas also contain potassium, fiber and folate.

Grains

- Minimum Daily Recommendation for Grains: Men 3-4 ounces and Women 3 ounces
 - 1 slice of bread is equivalent to 1 ounce or ½ cup of cooked rice is equivalent to 1 ounce.
 - Remember: these minimum recommendations are for individuals who get less than 30 minutes of activity a day. Adjust your intake to fit your activity level.
- At least half of all grains eaten should be whole grains.
- Studies and surveys have shown that American eat enough grains but we do not get enough whole grain in our diets.
- **Why are grains important?**
 - Grains help provide many nutrients as well as play a vital role in the maintenance of the body. Research has shown that individuals who eat whole grains as a part of a healthy diet have a reduced risk of some chronic diseases.
- **What food are in the grain group?**
 - Food that are made from rice, barley, wheat, oats, or another grain is considered to be part of the Grain Group.
 - Examples: Bread, pasta, oatmeal, tortillas, and grits.

- **What makes a grain “whole”?**
 - A grain is whole as long as the original parts like the bran, germ and endosperm are still present. These parts provide different kinds of nutrients.
 - For example the Bran contain important antioxidants, fiber and vitamin B. While the Germ contains some protein, minerals and healthy fats.
- **What is a refined grain?**
 - When one or more of the parts of the whole grain is removed it has been refined
 - Refined grains are products like white flour, white rice, white bread, and de-germed cornmeal. Refined grains are products like white flour, white rice, white bread, and de-germed cornmeal.
 - *Guess what? ----* Soymilk is considered in the dairy food group now!
 - Refining a grain changes the amount of nutrients one can get from consuming it. Usually $\frac{1}{4}$ or more is lost depending on the nutrients.
 - Aim to eat more grains that are not refined- Whole wheat and Whole grain are better options.

Dairy

- Daily Recommendation for Dairy: Men and Women 3 cups.
 - Try for low-fat or fat-free forms because they provide little or no solid fat.
- Consumption of dairy products has been linked to improved bone health and may help reduce the risk of osteoporosis.
- Dairy products contain nutrients like calcium, Vitamin D, potassium and more.
- **What counts as a serving for Dairy?**
 - 1 cup of milk, yogurt or soymilk.
 - 1.5 ounces of natural cheese
 - 2 ounces of processed cheese is around 1 cup

Reading Food Labels

Food labels will be changing in the industry to be easier to read and include a little more information.

Please refer to the handout labeled “The New and Improved Nutrition Facts Label- Key Changes” for more information.

Sources:

Becky Varner, RD/LD from Uptown Grocery

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<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/vegetables>

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<https://www.choosemyplate.gov/fruits>

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