

MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES FOR SENIORS: WEEK 3

Love your veggies

“Vegetable” is not a dirty word, although you should make sure to wash the dirt off any fresh produce you are preparing to eat. Vegetables are not the most popular food group, but they are an important part of a healthy diet. The key to including vegetables in your meals more often is to explore the wide variety available and prepare your vegetables in different ways.

Some common vegetables include broccoli, tomatoes, potatoes, green beans, peppers, Brussels sprouts, cauliflower, onions and carrots as well as green leafy veggies such as lettuce and kale. They include fresh, frozen and canned options, and 100% vegetable juice. Generally, 1 cup of cooked or raw vegetables counts as a serving of vegetables. If green leafy vegetables are raw then 2 cups count as a serving. If green leafy vegetables are cooked, then 1 cup of cooked greens counts as a serving.

Try cooking and preparing a vegetable in many different ways before you decide that you don't like it. You may not like steamed Brussels sprouts, but have you ever tried grilled Brussels sprouts?



Taste the rainbow

Variety is important but the most important thing is that you are eating vegetables every day and as a part of most meals. Each vegetable does offer different vitamins and minerals (this

is true for fruit too!) so eating many different kinds of vegetables is a great way to get the variety of nutrients that you need. Vegetables with similar coloring tend to have similar nutrients so try to include red, blue, orange, yellow, green, purple and many other colors of veggies in your diet.

Remember to check with your doctor if you are changing your daily intake of greens and other foods that are high in vitamin K if you are taking blood thinners. Upcoming newsletters will include tips and tricks for adding vegetables into your day.



© istock.com/monkeybusinessimages

Did you know?

Vegetables can easily be added to the dishes you already love like mac and cheese. Try adding a bag of frozen vegetables to previously veggie-free dishes such as pastas and casseroles.

Daily vegetable recommendations for older adults

Men over 50	2.5 cups
Women over 50	2 cups



WEEKLY RECIPE

Remember to wash your hands and prepare food safely.

Confetti Bean Salad

1. Drain and rinse **1 can of black beans and 1 can of corn.**
2. **Chop ¼ cup bell pepper and 1 small jalapeno (remove seeds).**
3. In a bowl, combine **1 cup salsa with beans, corn, jalapeno and green pepper,** and mix.

4. Serve with **corn chips** or as a topping for cooked **chicken, pork or tacos.**
5. Refrigerate leftovers.

Recipe adapted from “Confetti Bean Salad” by the University of Illinois Extension. <https://eat-move-save.extension.illinois.edu/eat/recipes/confetti-bean-salsa>



©istock.com/travellinglight

MSU Extension programming

Michigan State University Extension helps people improve their lives by bringing the vast knowledge and resources of MSU directly to individuals, communities and businesses.

To help you be healthy at every stage of life, MSU Extension delivers affordable, relevant, evidence-based education to serve the needs of adults, youth and families in urban and rural communities. Programs focus on helping you gain the skills you need to buy and prepare nutritious, budget-friendly foods, increase your physical activity and stretch your food dollars.

MSU Extension’s children and youth programs address needs and issues from birth through age 19, providing parents with educational resources related to your child’s development

and giving youth the opportunity through 4-H programs to build leadership and teach practical life skills.

With a presence in every Michigan county, Extension faculty and staff members provide tools to live and work better. From a personal meeting to information online, MSU Extension educators work every day to provide the most current information when people need it to ensure success – in the workplace, at home and in the community.

For more information or to join a class, visit www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/. To find your local county office, visit www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/county.

Acknowledgements

Adapted by Krystal Avila, Heather Dyer, Ashly Nelson, Yolanda Thrash, Amanda Hulet and Karen Barbash from the original family newsletter set developed by Erin E. Powell, MS, RDN; Tom Cummins; Elizabeth Dorman and Denise Aungst, MS; for MSU Extension. Based on a concept created by Denise Aungst and Layne Schlicher for MSU Extension. Originals were produced by ANR Creative for MSU Extension. Adaptations for the senior series were produced by the MSU Extension Educational Materials Team.

This material was funded by USDA’s Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program – SNAP.

MICHIGAN STATE
UNIVERSITY

Extension

MSU is an affirmative-action, equal-opportunity employer, committed to achieving excellence through a diverse workforce and inclusive culture that encourages all people to reach their full potential. Michigan State University Extension programs and materials are open to all without regard to race, color, national

origin, gender, gender identity, religion, age, height, weight, disability, political beliefs, sexual orientation, marital status, family status or veteran status. Issued in furtherance of MSU Extension work, acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. Jeffrey W. Dwyer, Director, MSU Extension, East Lansing, MI 48824. This information is for educational purposes only. Reference to commercial products or trade names does not imply endorsement by MSU Extension or bias against those not mentioned. IP-WEB-1:2021-PA/LG