

Baby Steps

A close-up photograph of a bee on a pink flower with a yellow center. The bee is positioned on the left side of the flower, facing right. The flower has a dense, yellow, conical center and several long, pink petals. The background is a soft, out-of-focus green.

12
SIMPLE
STEPS

TO A HEALTHIER
LIFESTYLE

12 STEPS TO LIVING HEALTHY!

**STEP
THREE**

*Color your
plate!*



STEP THREE COLOR YOUR PLATE

A DEFINITIVE GUIDE TO EATING MORE VEGETABLES

One of my favorite things to do when I go out alone is to stop in for lunch somewhere like Whole Foods and get a variety of different vegetables prepared in various ways I have never tried before!

When you eat a variety of colors on your plate such as red bell peppers, yellow tomatoes, green onions, purple eggplant, etc. you will have a sparkle like the brightest diamond! You can't go wrong with any plant that has bright, vibrant colors!

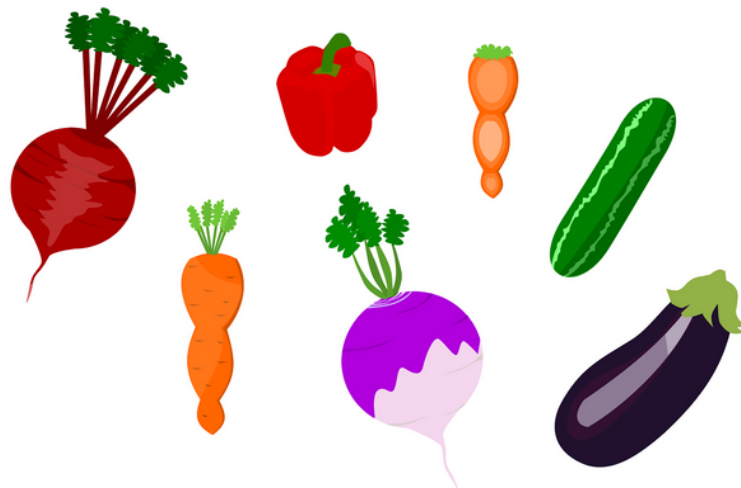
It is because fruits and vegetables contain phytochemicals (that is the substance that makes them have color) which are full of antioxidants that help your body to be healthier.

David Heber, MD, Ph.D., and Bowerman attempted to group foods according to their predominant phytochemical group, coding plant foods into seven color categories: red, red/purple, orange, orange/yellow, yellow/green, green, and white/green* so we now see our fruit and vegetable rainbow!

Why we should all eat more vegetables:

- Can significantly reduce the risk for heart disease
- Can protect against certain types of cancers.
- Particularly veggies with fiber may reduce the risk of heart disease, obesity, and type 2 diabetes.
- Focusing on fruits and veggies rich in potassium contributes to lower blood pressure, and may also reduce the risk of developing kidney stones as well as helping to decrease bone loss.
- Vegetables are typically lower in calories per cup than other higher-calorie foods; this contributes to a lower calorie intake.

When eating the rainbow, try to focus on vegetables as much as possible and limit your intake of fruit. Make sure you are adding at least one, but preferably two or even more vegetables to each of your meals daily. Remember: Eat the rainbow, and you will sparkle like a diamond.



How to get more veggies on your plate

- Superfood salads
- Vegetable stir fries
- Vegetable soups and Cream of Vegetable soups are an excellent way to get in lots of servings of your favorite vegetables.
- Smoothies: not just “green” ones; I often add a handful of spinach to my children's smoothies and they never even know.
- Be deceptive. You can always go veggie ninja and add purees to your recipes without your children even being aware of it. Try this sneaky mac-n-cheese recipe full of butternut squash puree!

Here's how to make eating vegetables more fun if you are not used to eating them:

Raw broccoli, red and green peppers, celery sticks or cauliflower taste great dipped in salad dressings. Try making your own using one of our favorite recipes. It's easy to add color to salads by adding baby carrots, shredded red cabbage, cubed or sliced beets, purple onions or spinach leaves. Include in-season vegetables for variety through the year.

Try adding green beans or baby peas in flavorful mixed dishes, like chili, vegetable soup or minestrone.

Spend a couple of minutes decorating dishes with vegetable slices arranged nicely. Fancy restaurants do this all the time!

Keep a bowl of cut-up vegetables in a clear container in the fridge, cherry tomatoes, carrot sticks, celery sticks, sliced bell peppers, small broccoli florets, sliced cucumbers and even nontraditional veggies like jicama!

Getting your children to eat their vegetables might be easier than you think when you follow these tips:

- Be a great role model for children by eating vegetables with meals and as snacks, keep cut veggies within reach for children, while saving sugary snacks out of sight for a rare treat.
- Consider letting children choose the dinner vegetables or keeping a buffet of containers of veggies in your fridge for easy salads.
- Depending on their age, children can help shop for, clean, peel, or cut up vegetables. Even younger children can “snap” beans in half!
- Encourage children to pick a new vegetable to try if they go with your shopping.
- Use cut-up vegetables as part of afternoon snacks, keeping these within easy access will increase the odds your child will eat them.
- Many kids don't like mixed vegetables; many do not like their foods to touch. To remedy this, try serving two vegetables separately. I have had a lot of success preparing meals for my children in Bento Trays even at home.

Top Vegetable Choices

When selecting vegetables, it is preferable to choose what is in the season. Another important habit is choosing as many different colors of vegetables as possible. Here are a few of the healthiest vegetable choices.

The next three pages include lists for vegetables in their season.



Vegetables In Season Year Round

Amaranth
Arrowroot
Banana Squash
Bell Peppers
Black Eyed Peas
Black Radish
Bok Choy
Broccoflower
Broccolini
Burdock Root
Cabbage
Carrots
Celeriac (Celery Root)
Celery
Cherry Tomatoes
Chinese Eggplants
Galangal Root
Leek
Lettuce
Mushrooms
Olives
Onions
Parsnips
Pearl Onions
Potatoes
Rutabagas
Salad Savoy
Snow Peas
Wasabi Root
Yucca Root



Vegetables In the Season of Spring

Artichokes
Asparagus
Belgian Endive
Broccoli
Butter Lettuce
Cactus
Chayote Squash
Chives
Collard Greens
Corn
Fava Beans
Fennel
Fiddlehead Ferns
Green Beans
Manoa Lettuce
Morel Mushrooms
Mustard Greens
Pea Pods
Peas
Purple Asparagus
Radicchio
Ramps
Red Leaf Lettuce
Rhubarb
Snow Peas
Sorrel
Spinach
Spring Baby Lettuce
Swiss Chard
Vidalia Onions
Watercress



Vegetables In the Season of Fall

Acorn Squash
Belgian Endive
Black Salsify
Broccoli
Brussels Sprouts
Butter Lettuce
Buttercup Squash
Butternut Squash
Cauliflower
Chayote Squash
Chinese Long Beans
Delicata Squash
Diakon Radish
Endive
Garlic
Ginger
Jalapeno Peppers
Jerusalem Artichoke
Kohlrabi
Pumpkin
Radicchio
Sweet Dumpling Squash
Sweet Potatoes
Swiss Chard
Turnips
Winter Squash

If you want to take your health to the next level, you need to become a Veggie Ninja! Everyone knows about salads— but eating veggies is about so much more! There's green juices, green smoothies, veggie lasagna, veggie soup, fermented veggies, marinated veggies, pureed veggies... for a start...

Veggie Ninjas frequent the produce section to try new vegetables regularly but they can also be found at Farmer's Markets and meeting other veggie ninjas at CSA (community supported agriculture) events.

Add generous amounts of veggies to soups and chilis when you make them.

If you like smoothies for breakfast and you already have some favorites, try throwing in a handful of spinach and blending it well. I bet you won't even taste it! The more you do it, the more you can add and not notice a difference in flavor.

Start by adding a salad to every meal. When I first started the transition to a healthier lifestyle, the first thing I did was to add the RX Salad (recipe on the next page) before dinner at night. You can try it in a jar and take it to work! Add some grilled chicken or a can of tuna!

Don't just make waffles, make pumpkin waffles!

What I'm trying to say is look for a way to add vegetables to everything! If you want to be inspired try a new cookbook! You can find cookbook recommendations in the Guides Section at www.thatorganicmom.com



Easy RX Salad in a Jar

Ingredients

1 cup spinach, torn into bite-size pieces
1 cup romaine
1/4 cup shredded red cabbage
1/2 cup sliced red bell pepper
1/2 tomato, chopped
1/4 cup garbanzo beans (chickpeas) rinsed well
1/2 cup grated carrot
1/4 avocado, cubed
2 TBSP extra virgin olive oil
1 tsp your favorite vinegar (I like balsamic, apple cider, and Vanilla-Fig Balsamic, play with different varieties)
S&P
FlavorGod Seasonings, optional

Layer ingredients in a jar, I like to start with the beans on the bottom (and meat if I'm adding it)

In a small container add oil and vinegar and seasonings of your choice, shake well then pour over salad IF you are going to eat it right away. If you are saving it for later it's best to keep the dressing separate. I use a tiny container at the top of my jar.

This is your basic prescription salad. It's your go to salad to get in all your veggies!

Make several of these and store in the fridge.

If you like you can add chicken, tuna, steak or a little bit of cheese, but don't go overboard, remember this is to fill your veggie requirement!