

Easy tips on increasing your fruit & vegetable intake - 01/04/2014.

Whether you are living with health problems or simply trying to meet the demands of a busy life, good nutrition has a big impact on essential factors such as energy, mood, weight, immune system, digestion and even sleep. The latest research shows it can even affect how long you live and recommendations have now been increased on how many portions is enough. You can learn to maximize the amount you eat with minimal effort, and once you make a few small changes this can become an automatic part of daily life and is a great way to take care of yourself.

It can seem like a daunting task even to those with good health, so how can you do this if you are living with chronic health problems without radically changing how you eat or learning a whole new way to cook? These tips are simple and cheap ways to add in fruit and vegetables that - once you have added them to your shopping list - take little effort to actually eat.

Ways you can achieve 7 to 10 portions of fruit and veg a day easily:

- Add a portion of fruit to breakfast cereal
- Have a small glass of fruit juice with breakfast
- Mid-morning slump? An apple and a few almonds provide a good balanced energy release
- Take leftover pasta or rice to work - add peppers, tomato, etc. and keep them cool until lunch by adding frozen peas in the morning
- Add more salad to your sandwiches and eat a carrot with them

IF YOU DO ALL THE ABOVE YOU WILL HAVE ALREADY EATEN 5 PORTIONS BY THE AFTERNOON!

- Swap an afternoon snack to a raw carrot, celery sticks, olives, etc.
- Add extra veg to sauces, a handful of mushrooms per person, some frozen peas, etc.
- Take fruit with you when you're out and about to make it less likely you will reach for chocolate to combat an energy dip - dried or canned counts
- Add canned beans, grated carrots and shredded cabbage to salads and soups to make them more filling
- Have at least two vegetables with your evening meal
- Peckish before a meal - have a few olives.
- If you are eating out, choose a starter based around salad or add a side vegetable

If you can increase your intake of fruit and vegetables you will feel the benefit in multiple ways, have an increased sense of wellbeing and in some cases even a reduction in symptoms. Happy chomping!