

Eat More Veggies for St. Patrick's Day and Beyond

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Most Americans aged 2 and older do not eat the recommended amounts of vegetables. Vegetables provide vitamins and minerals, and most are low in calories and fat, so it is important to add more vegetables to your meals and snacks. It is important to vary your veggies and eat the colors of the rainbow for more nutrients.

5 Ways for Children to Eat More Veggies

- Serve raw vegetables such as broccoli, carrots, tomatoes, bell peppers, or cauliflower with hummus, yogurt-based dips, or other low-fat options. Since raw vegetables can pose choking hazards for young children, ensure they are safe by finely chopping or cutting them into thin strips before serving.
- Make mini pizzas by using whole-wheat English muffins as the crust and top with pizza sauce, cheese, and chopped veggies.
- Create bugs on a log by choosing celery, cucumber, or carrot sticks as the log and top with peanut butter or another type of nut butter, and raisins or dried cranberries for the bugs.
- Involve children in food preparation according to their age and skills; this increases the likelihood that they will try the dishes they helped create.

Shamrocks and Gold Smoothie

- $\frac{2}{3}$ cup 100% apple juice
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup fresh baby spinach
 - 2 cups frozen pineapple chunks, no sugar added
 - 1 cup low-fat vanilla yogurt
 - 1 banana
1. Wash hands with soap and water. Gently wash spinach under cold running water. If spinach is marked "pre-washed" or "ready-to-eat", you can use it without further washing.
 2. Add apple juice and spinach leaves to blender. Blend first to help make it smooth and avoid leafy chunks.
 3. Place the remaining ingredients in the blender.
 4. Blend until smooth and serve. Makes 4 servings. Each serving contains: 140 calories, 1g fat, 45mg sodium, 30g carbohydrates, 2g fiber, 2g protein



Sources:

1. U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. *Dietary Guidelines for Americans, 2020-2025. 9th Edition. December 2020.* <https://www.dietaryguidelines.gov>
2. MyPlate, Kids, United States Department of Agriculture: <https://www.myplate.gov/life-stages/kids>