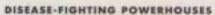
Be Smart—Take 5!

by Marsha Hudnell, R.D., M.S.

5 OR MORE SERVINGS OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES EACH DAY HELP FIGHT CANCER AND HEART DISEASE

Despite the wonderful variety of fruits and vegetables available, most of us don't eat enough of nature's finest gifts. According to the National Cancer Institute, we each average only 3½ servings of

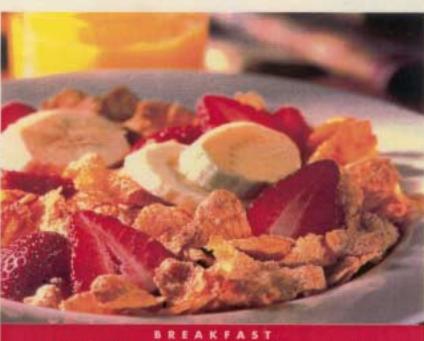
fruits and vegetables a day-well below the 5 or more servings recommended by health experts. By attaining this "magic" number daily, you may help protect yourself and your family against heart disease and cancer.



It makes no difference what form of produce you choose; whether it is fresh, canned, frozen, or dried, you'll find a colorful array of nutrition-packed produce to serve your family. These are the nutrients found in fruits and vegetables that benefit your health the most:

. Beta-carotene, found in dark green, orange, and yellow produce, may help protect against heart disease, stroke, and some cancers. A study of 22,000 men, which began in 1982, has so far shown that beta-carotene may be a promising component in reducing heart disease risk.

Other studies have shown beta-carotene helped reduce the risk of some cancers. However, a study concluded this year surprisingly showed that beta-carotene supplements did not help prevent lung cancer among heavy smokers. Nevertheless, the cancer institute stresses that a healthful lifestyle, emphasizing fruits and vegetables and not smoking, is essential in cancer prevention.



Top your cernal with fruit and have a glass of juice to start you an your way

- · Vitamin C, abundant in citrus fruits, green peppers, cabbage, and cantaloupe, may work as an antioxidant to strengthen our built-in defenses against disease. Inadequate vitamin C may curtail the ability of watchdog-like tissues to slow or stop a cancerous tumor's growth. Additionally, a 1993 study suggested that a diet rich in vitamin C may increase HDL, the good cholesterol in the blood, reducing the risk for heart disease.
- . Folic acid is important to healthy pregnancies and may act against cancer. Green leafy vegetables, asparagus, lima beans, broccoli, and beets are good sources. All women of child-bearing age need plenty of folic acid before and during pregnancy to help prevent birth defects. A deficiency also appears to be linked to chromosome damage, which may initiate some cancers-
- · Insoluble dietary fiber is known for its potential colon. cancer preventing properties. It is plentiful in the seeds and peels of fruits and vegetables.
- · Soluble dietary fiber, familiar to many in the form of out bran, is found in apples, citrus fruits, squash, cauliflower, and carrots. As part of a low-fat diet, soluble fiber may help reduce blood cholesterol and heart disease risk.

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