



# 10 WAYS TO EAT MORE

## FRUITS AND VEGETABLES



Adapted Partly from the U.S. Department of Agriculture

1

### SNEAK IN VEGGIES

Adding more vegetables to dishes your loved one already eats is a great way to get your loved one eating more vegetables. Some examples include adding cooked vegetables to pasta, casseroles, quesadillas, and omelets, topping pizza with cooked veggies, and adding leafy greens to sandwiches or wraps. Some people with dementia may be confused by visible vegetables in dishes, so you can also try using a cooked puree vegetable like peas or carrots to replace part of the liquid in soups, sauces, or to use in place of gravy.

2

### ADD FRUITS TO FOOD

Some examples include adding fruit to yogurt, cereal, or oatmeal, adding avocado to sandwiches or toast, and using dried fruit to make your own inexpensive trail mix.

3

### DRINK 100% JUICE

Drinking 100% fruit or vegetable juice can count as a serving of fruit or vegetables. As a bonus, drinking 100% juice will help keep your loved one hydrated! Juice can have a lot of sugar in it, so be sure to read the nutrition label and avoid juice with added sugar. Check with your doctor if your loved one has any health conditions that may impact the amount of sugar they can have.

4

### VEGETABLE SOUP

Serving vegetable soup is an easy way to eat more vegetables and is a great option if your loved one has trouble using utensils. Try serving the soup in a plain cup with handles and letting them sip on it.

**5**

## SMOOTHIES

Smoothies are another great option if your loved one has trouble using utensils, chewing, or needs thickened liquids. Including a handful of spinach in a fruit smoothie will add more nutrition but won't change the flavor.

**6**

## LEAVE REMINDERS

If your loved one simply forgets to eat fruits or vegetables, try leaving written reminders or pictures. You can also place a bowl of colorful fruits on a counter or table to serve as a reminder.

**7**

## FRUIT OR VEGETABLE-BASED DESSERTS

If your loved one has a sweet tooth, try serving desserts that include fruits or vegetables instead of desserts with little nutritional value. Examples include zucchini bread, blueberry muffins, banana cookies, baked apples, apple sauce, or topping ice cream or yogurt with fruit. Serving baked fruit, apple sauce, or canned fruit as dessert can also be good options if your loved one needs softer foods.

**8**

## BE MINDFUL OF YOUR LOVED ONE'S PREFERENCES

Try serving fruits or vegetables your loved one has always enjoyed. However, remember dementia may cause your loved one's preferences to suddenly change. If your loved one stops liking the fruits and vegetables they used to like, try serving different ones. Offer two different choices of produce if possible. However, remember that more than two choices can overwhelm someone with dementia and may make them not want to eat.

**9**

## SERVE AS AN EXAMPLE

Eating fruits or vegetables with your loved one may encourage them to eat as well. And as a caregiver, fruits and vegetables are important for your health too!

**10**

## BUY FRESH, FROZEN, DRIED, OR CANNED FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Fresh, frozen, dried, and canned produce all have similar nutritional value, so feel free to buy whatever best fits your budget and preferences. Just remember to drain and rinse canned food to reduce the sodium.

