

What does it mean?

To “eat the rainbow” means to incorporate various colors of fruits and vegetables into one’s diet.

Eating fruits and vegetables that have different pigments provide various vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals (different types of plant chemicals that can be an antioxidant and are beneficial for human health).

Having a diet rich in fruits and vegetables may help: reduce the risk of heart disease such as heart attack and stroke, obesity, type 2 diabetes, bone loss, and developing kidney stones and, may protect against certain types of cancers.



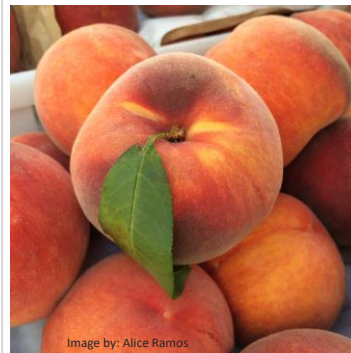
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Eat the Rainbow

The importance of having a colorful diet



P: 808.839.1990
E: mou@patch-hi.org
560 N Nimitz Highway,
Suite 218, Honolulu, HI
96817 | HOURS: M - F
7:30am - 4:30pm



Colors of the Rainbow

Why are fruits and vegetables good?

Fruits are a good source of dietary fiber and essential nutrients including potassium, Vitamin C, and folate also known as folic acid.

Vegetables are a good source of dietary fiber and essential nutrients such as potassium, folate or folic acid, Vitamin A, and Vitamin C.

Dietary fiber is important for reducing blood cholesterol levels, helping to lower the risk of heart disease, aiding in proper bowel movements, and providing the sense of fullness.

Potassium is important for maintaining a healthy blood pressure.

Vitamin A is important for maintaining healthy eyes and skin and protecting against infections.

Vitamin C is important for the growth and repair of body issues, healing cuts and wounds, keeping gums and teeth healthy, and aiding in the absorption of iron. Iron is important for making hemoglobin which is a part of the blood cell.

Folate is important for forming red blood cells.

Red: Lycopene and anthocyanin are phytochemicals that produce this pigment. Lycopene is an antioxidant that helps to reduce the risk of heart attacks and certain cancers such as prostate cancer. Anthocyanin is an antioxidant helps to improve heart health and body function.

Orange and Yellow: The Carotenoid phytochemical produces these hues. An important carotenoid is called Beta-carotene which the body converts to Vitamin A. Orange and yellow fruits are also sources for Vitamin C, omega-3 fatty acids and folate.



Green: Chlorophyll is the phytochemical that produces this pigment. Green fruits and vegetables contain: Lutein and Zeaxanthin, which are antioxidants that help with vision, Indoles, which is a naturally occurring chemical that helps to protect against some cancers, Isothiocyanates which tell enzymes in the liver to remove carcinogenic (cancer causing) compounds from the body, Vitamin K which is important for blood clot formation, potassium, omega-3 fatty acids, folate, Vitamin B, and some carotenoids.

Blue and Purple: Anthocyanin is the phytochemical that produces these hues. Anthocyanin is an antioxidant that helps to protect cells against damage, maintain blood pressures, reduce heart disease and cancer, and improve memory function.

White and Brown: Anthoxanthins is the phytochemical that produces these pigments. Some white fruits and vegetables also contain the chemical Allicin, which helps to lower blood pressure and cholesterol, reduce the risk of stomach cancer and heart disease, and maintain healthy kidneys vital organs, and heart.