

Lesson: Fruits and Veggies

Supplies Needed:

- EP_Five-Minute-Fitness-Ideas
- 1.3_LV_Healthy-Body-Visual
- Paper, pencils and crayons

Goals:

- Students will understand they need to eat fruits and vegetables.
- Students will learn that fruits and vegetables should fill half their plates.
- Students will learn the health benefits of consuming a diet rich in fruits and vegetables.

Background:

Students love to talk about how to tell the difference between fruits and vegetables. Most fruits have seeds on the inside. There are exceptions such as strawberries and some exotic berries.

Scientists classify fruits and vegetables based on whether or not they have seeds. In the health world, however, we classify fruits and vegetables based on their nutrition profile. There are numerous nutrients in fruits and vegetables, but one of the deciding factors of whether a food is classified as a fruit or vegetable is the sugar content. Most fruits taste sweet such as watermelon, grapes, apples etc.

There are foods that are technically fruits because they have seeds, but taste more like vegetables such as zucchini, cucumber, tomatoes etc. Nutritionists classify these fruits as vegetables. It can all get very confusing! In general, a good rule of thumb is that if it tastes sweet, it is probably a fruit. Regardless of whether it is a fruit or vegetable, it is important to include plants in the diet. They are filled with nutrients that help keep you healthy and strong.

Lesson:

(Choose an exercise from 5 minute Fitness Ideas and do it for five minutes.)

Can anyone tell me what we talked about during the last lesson?

(Energy Balance)

What happens when we don't have enough food?

(We feel hungry, our stomachs may grumble, we might feel low on energy, we could get sick.)

What happens when we have too much food?

(We feel full, we may get an upset stomach, feel like throwing up, or we might feel very sleepy.)

What happens when we eat the amount of Go Foods that our bodies need?

(We have the energy to do the things we love like basketball, tag, dance, soccer, etc.)

Grown-ups always tell you to eat your fruits and veggies, but do you know why they are so important?

(Fruits and vegetables contain vitamins and minerals that your body needs to grow strong and stay healthy.)

(Show slide 1.) Let's take a look at the food guide called MyPlate. This is a guide for how much of each type of food you should eat at each meal.

The red portion represents fruits. **(Make the okay sign.)** Can you think of some tasty fruits?

(Apples, bananas, kiwi, grapes, oranges, berries, watermelon, etc.)

Now let's take a look at the vegetable **(Smile.)** food group, the section colored green. Can you think of some yummy veggies?

(Carrots, broccoli, spinach, potatoes, sweet potatoes, celery, asparagus, etc.)

When you add the red part with the green one, the fruits and vegetables make up half of the plate. At each meal try to fill half your plate with fruits and vegetables – and eat them too.

(Show slide 2.) So why do we need to eat fruits and veggies?

(Fruits and vegetables contain vitamins and minerals and fiber that help keep our bodies strong and healthy.)

(Show slide 3.) I want everyone to look at their skin. Vitamin A, which is found in vegetables such as carrots and sweet potatoes, helps your skin stay healthy. It also promotes good vision which means it helps you see better. Without Vitamin A, we wouldn't be able to see in the dark! And it helps keep your hair healthy so it looks its best.

(Show slide 4.) Raise your hand if you've ever had a bad cold? Being sick is not very fun. Vitamin C, which is found in fruits such as strawberries and oranges, helps build a strong immune system, so your body can fight off germs, colds and sickness. Vitamin C also helps your body heal when you get a cut or bruise.

(Show slide 5.) Some vegetables, such as broccoli and spinach, contain calcium. Calcium is needed to build strong bones and teeth. Can anyone name another good source of calcium?

(Milk and yogurt)

So now you can see why it is so important to eat fruits and vegetables! Fruits and vegetables contain vitamins and minerals to keep your body healthy.

Now we are going to do an activity to help us remember to eat our fruits and vegetables.
(Show slide 6.)

(Hand out or have students take out paper and pencils.) First, trace your hand onto the paper.

Did you know that children should eat at least three vegetables and two fruits a day? What is three plus two? (*That's right – five.*) Everyone should eat five fruits and vegetables every day. To help you remember this I want you to draw three of your favorite vegetables on three of your fingers that you traced. Now think of your favorite two fruits and draw each one of them on the last two fingers. When you're done it should look something like this **(Show slide 7.)**.

How many fruits and vegetables should you eat every day?
(*Five*)

Here are some ways you can get your five servings of fruits and vegetables a day:

- One way to eat more fruits and veggies is to enjoy them as a snack! You can take apples and oranges anywhere! Another great snack is baby carrots with salsa or bean dip.
- Did you know when you eat vegetable soup and fruit smoothies they count toward your five servings a day?

Can you think of other tasty foods that have fruit or veggies in them?
(*Guacamole, tomato sauce, etc.*)

Another way to eat more veggies is to mix it in with food you enjoy. For example, you can add broccoli to your macaroni and cheese, or add extra lettuce and tomatoes to your sandwiches.

Bring home your picture and show it to your parents or put it on your refrigerator. Give yourself a high five every day you eat your 5 fruits **(Make the okay sign.)** and vegetables **(Smile.)!**

Optional Extension Activity: If most students normally bring a fruit or a vegetable to class it might be fun for them to guess how many they might have in a week, or have them set a goal for themselves and try and eat that many in one day or in a week.