

- Store ripe pears unwashed in the refrigerator. Handle gently to avoid bruising.
- Serve in salads, add to jelly, or slice and dip in chocolate sauce for an elegant dessert.

## Pineapple

- Look for deep green leaves and a fresh, bright appearance. The colour of the skin does not indicate taste; avoid fruit with obvious bruising or soft spots.
- Refrigerate fresh pineapple.
- Serve fresh in salads; use on a fruit kebab with strawberries and grapes; slice pineapple lengthwise, remove the fruit, chop, and add back to the shell with other mixed fruit for a creative presentation.

## Potatoes

- Choose fairly clean potatoes that are firm and smooth with shallow eyes; avoid those with wrinkles, wilted skins, or soft, dark areas.
- Store in a cool, dark, well-ventilated place; do not refrigerate. Potatoes can also be stored for one to two months in a burlap or brown paper bag with an apple to prevent them from sprouting.
- Add garlic or other favourite herbs and spices to mashed potatoes; steam potatoes and top with fresh herbs and spices.

## Strawberries

- Select fully coloured berries that are firm, plump, have a sweet aroma, and still have the stem attached.

- Eat fresh berries within a few days of purchase.
- Do not wash or remove stems until ready to use.
- Slice and add to cereal for breakfast, blend with curd for a delicious strawberry lassi, or use on top of reduced-fat ice cream, pastries, and cakes.

## Tomatoes

- Ripe tomatoes are completely red or reddish orange. They have a sweet aroma and yield slightly to gentle palm pressure.
- Set in a bowl or ventilated paper bag, and store at room temperature to ripen. Do not refrigerate.
- Add to salads; use as a base for sauces and soups; try stuffing a large tomato with cooked pasta and vegetables and steaming or shallow cooking.

## Watermelon

- Look for watermelon that is symmetrical and feels heavy for its size. Ripe watermelon will have a healthy sheen and buttery yellow underside.
- Store uncut watermelon at room temperature for up to two weeks. Cut watermelon should be loosely wrapped and refrigerated.
- Use in fresh fruit salads; scoop out fruit and cut rind like a basket for a pretty mixed fruit salad.

# Eat Smart with Fruits and Vegetables



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Eating fruits and vegetables is an easy and delicious way to improve your health. To reduce your risk of cancer, the American Cancer Society recommends five or more servings of fruits and vegetables each day – along with other foods from plant sources, such as breads, cereals, grains, pasta, and rice. Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables is the best way to get the beneficial vitamins, minerals, fiber, antioxidants, and phytochemicals in food that help prevent disease, give you energy, and help you feel great. Make your favourite fruits and vegetables more than a garnish – make them the centre of a great meal!

## Hints for Eating Smart with Fruits and Vegetables

- Add up your servings each day. A serving is considered one medium-sized piece of fruit; ¼ cup of dried fruit; 6 ounces (½ cup) of 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice; ½ cup canned or cooked vegetables; or 1 cup of raw vegetables.
- Fruits packed in their own juice, frozen fruits and vegetables, and low-sodium canned vegetables provide the same healthful benefits as fresh produce.
- Try dried fruits as a tasty and energizing snack you can take anywhere.
- Try dipping fresh fruit in a low-fat curd and custard dip.

## Follow these tips for picking, storing, and using fresh fruits and vegetables:

### Apples

- Select apples that have a good colour; a fresh, bright appearance and that are firm to the touch.
- Store apples in the refrigerator.
- Try adding chopped apples to salads; have dried apples for an on-the-go snack; sprinkle with sugar or jaggary and bake for dessert.

### Bananas

- Choose bananas that are fully yellow or with slight brown spots. Ripen green bananas in a brown paper bag with an apple or tomato.
- Store at room temperature, preferably on a banana hanger or hook.
- Slice bananas and add to cereal or curd; cook with a little bit of sugar or jaggary for dessert; add to fresh fruit salad.

### Lady Finger (Bhindi)

- Look for tender pods (the tips will bend with very slight pressure). Always buy bhindi that has a bright green colour and is free from blemishes.

### Broccoli

- Choose broccoli with green or purplish-green heads, never yellow.
- Refrigerate fresh broccoli unwashed in a plastic bag in the coolest part of the refrigerator, usually the bottom drawer. It should last up to 16 days.
- Steam lightly with your favourite spices.

### Cabbage

- Choose a heavy, compact head that has no discoloration.
- Store cabbage in the coolest part of the refrigerator, usually the bottom drawer for one to two weeks.
- Use in stir fry; steam lightly with your favourite spices.

### Cantaloupe (Kharbooja)

- Look for cantaloupe that has a sweet aroma and that has a stem end that is slightly soft.
- Do not choose those that have part of the stem still attached.
- Let stand at room temperature for two to three days, then refrigerate in a tightly sealed container (the gas given off by ripening melons will spoil other produce).
- Serve fresh wedges for breakfast, or top with low-fat ice cream for a healthy dessert.

### Capsicum

- Choose firm, glossy capsicum with unwrinkled skins and green stems.
- Refrigerate capsicum unwashed in a plastic bag.
- Add capsicum to salads, stir-fry, or stuff with cooked rice and vegetables of your choice and steam or shallow cook for a healthy main dish.

### Carrots

- Look for firm carrots that are bright orange. If carrots become wilted, place in cold water for a few minutes.
- Store washed carrots in a plastic bag in the coolest part of the refrigerator, usually the bottom drawer. They should keep for several weeks.
- Enjoy fresh with a low-fat salad dressing dip; stir-fry with your favourite vegetables.

### Cauliflower

- Choose a heavy, firm cauliflower that is white with little discoloration.
- Keep cauliflower dry and refrigerate in a plastic bag. Before using fresh cauliflower, place head down in cold water with a teaspoon each of vinegar and salt to crisp it and draw out any insects.
- Serve raw with dip or in a salad, stir-fry with your favourite vegetables, or steam lightly with your favourite spices for a healthy main dish.

### Grapes

- Choose grapes that are plump, smooth, and even-coloured.
- Store unwashed in a plastic bag in your refrigerator.
- Pop into the freezer for a frozen treat; place on a toothpick with a piece of cheese and a strawberry slice for a fruit kebab.

### Greens

- Look for spinach, mustard, methi, turnip, and other greens that have the darkest green colour.
- Store in the coolest part of the refrigerator, usually the bottom drawer. Try using a little salt in your water when cleaning fresh greens to help get rid of the soil that tends to stick in them.
- Combine raw spinach, red onions, mushrooms, and raisins for a delicious salad or steam lightly with your favourite spices for a healthy main dish.

### Mango

- Look for mangos that have a bright, rich colour. Mangos should be tender to the touch when ripe; avoid those with blemishes and soft spots.

- Peel and cut into bite-size pieces to eat alone or add to a beautiful fruit salad.
- Blend with curd for a delicious mango lassi.

### Oranges

- Look for oranges that have a fresh appearance and feel heavy for their size.
- Oranges will keep at room temperature for a few days. For best results, store in the refrigerator in a plastic bag or in the coolest part of the refrigerator, usually the bottom drawer.
- Eat as a snack; toss in salads.

### Papaya

- Look for ripe papayas that are yellow-orange in colour. If no ripe papayas are available, a mostly green papaya will ripen in five to seven days at room temperature. Half-green, half-yellow fruit will ripen in two to four days.
- Ripe papayas will keep in the refrigerator for a week.
- Enjoy as a snack; add to fruit salads; mix with other fruits and chillies for a delicious fruit chutney.

### Peaches

- Select unripened peaches that are yellow or cream coloured, and that have a mild aroma. Ripen in a brown paper bag at room temperature.
- Peaches are best when eaten as soon as they are ripe, but can be refrigerated for three to five days.
- Add to cereal or curd; blend with curd for a delicious peach lassi.

### Pears

- To select pears, gently squeeze at the skinniest end; it will be slightly soft on a ripe pear.
- To ripen, place in a brown paper bag at room temperature.