

Walk NEBRASKA

Use Fruits and Vegetables to Help Manage Your Weight

There are a number of ways to lose or maintain a healthy weight. Using more fruits and vegetables along with whole grains and lean meats, nuts and beans is a safe and healthy way.

Take a good look at your dinner plate. Vegetables, fruit and whole grains should take up the largest portion of your plate. If they do not, replace some of the meat, cheese, white pasta or rice with legumes or your favorite vegetable. For example, add 1 cup of chopped vegetables such as broccoli, tomatoes or peppers, while removing 1 cup of the rice or pasta in your favorite dish. This dish will be just as satisfying but have fewer calories than the same amount of the original version.

Canned or frozen fruits and vegetables are good options along with fresh produce. However, be careful to choose those without added sugar, syrup, cream sauces or other ingredients that will only add calories.

Choose whole fruit over fruit drinks and juices. Fruit juices have lost the fiber from the fruit. It is better to eat the whole fruit because it contains the fiber that helps you feel full. One 6-ounce serving of orange juice has 85 calories, compared to just 65 calories in a medium orange.

Whole fruit gives you a bigger size snack than the same fruit dried for the same number of calories. A small box of raisins (1/4 cup) is about 100 calories. For the same number of calories, you can eat 1 cup of grapes.

Helping control your weight is not the only benefit of eating more fruits and vegetables. Diets rich in fruits and vegetables may reduce the risk of some types of cancer and other chronic diseases. Fruits and vegetables also provide essential vitamins and minerals, fiber and other substances that are important for good health.

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
<http://www.cdc.gov/Features/FruitsAndVeggies/>