

# 10 HACKS TO GET YOUR FRUIT & VEGGIE FIX

We all know we should be eating our fill of fruits and veggies but many of us are falling well short of the USDA's recommended daily dose of 5 cups per day. If you're struggling to squeeze those servings into your daily diet, try these simple, fun and totally tasty ways to include more fruits and veggies into your life. Good for all ages, these tips are especially helpful if you have a picky (or as I like to call them—"selective") eater at home.

## 4 UPGRADE IT

If your breakfast, lunch and dinner is a fruit and veggie wasteland, try making one small change at a time to increase your servings. Sprinkle a handful of berries on to your oatmeal, spread avocado on your toast, or add some sautéed tomatoes and greens to your omelet. Don't forget to throw a handful of greens into the bottom of your soup or chili bowl! You can also replace common starches like pasta, rice, and potatoes with a bed of veggies instead. of raw greens to "soup up" your veggie power. They will cook down from the heat in no time!

City and country dwellers, alike, can grow veggies. Whether grown in patio pots or a couple of large garden boxes, nothing gives adults (and kids!) a better appreciation for fresh veggies than planting, caring for and harvesting your own.

## 6 GROW IT

## 9 "FRY" IT

Cut sweet potatoes, zucchini, carrots or parsnips into fries, toss them with some savory spices, and bake them until they are nice and crispy. Your kids will love submerging them into their favorite dip. And, no, ketchup doesn't really count as a veggie no matter what anyone says.

## 1

### BLEND IT

You can pack several servings of fruits and veggies into one smoothie! Try adding veggies like leafy greens, celery or cucumber. Since it doesn't have much flavor, spinach is a great introductory green. If your kids refuse to eat anything green unless it's a Skittle, you can conveniently disguise the color by adding vibrantly-colored berries. Other smoothie-friendly fruits include bananas, mangoes, apples and pears.

## LADLE IT

## 2

Toss any leftover veggies into a pot for an easy, flavor-packed soup. Root veggies like carrots, parsnips and sweet potatoes make a nice base. Whether you choose to puree your soup or not, ladle it onto a pile of raw greens to "soup up" your veggie power. They will cook down from the heat in no time!

## 3 DIP IT

When it comes to snacks, veggies can sometimes feel boring on their own. But dipping those celery and carrot sticks, or some red bell pepper slices and cucumbers into hummus or guacamole takes it to a whole new level. Or if you're in the mood for something sweeter, spread some almond butter or tahini on apple and pear slices.

## 5

### DELIVER IT

Join a CSA! Having fruits and veggies delivered to your door makes it all the more likely that you will actually eat them. Place fresh fruit in a bowl on your counter as a reminder to dig in when hunger strikes. Build your weekly meals around the bounty of your box! You're guaranteed to come across some never-before-tried items, too, so you'll expand your veggie horizons.

## TEXTURIZE IT

## 7

A clever way to increase the volume of veggies you put into your recipes is to shred, puree, dice and chop them. Shredded zucchini and carrots are great in soups, chilis and stews. But they are equally fabulous in breads, cakes and cookies. Pureed veggies add a fun twist to everyday sauces. And diced veggies can turn a regular pasta dish or salad into a crunchtastic meal.

## BURGER-IZE IT

## 8

Not all burgers have to be made of meat! Mix black beans or sweet potatoes with diced or shredded carrots, zucchini, peppers, celery and onions and you've got a mighty tasty meal. You can even throw in some corn, peas or chopped greens. If it's served on a bun with cheese and ketchup, your kids will think it's a burger no matter what it's made of!

## 10

### SIMPLIFY IT

Take shortcuts wherever you can and you'll be more likely to consistently eat fruits and veggies all throughout the week. Pre-wash and cut your veggies and store them in the fridge to make lunch and dinner prep easier. Or better yet, buy pre-washed or pre-cut veggies. It's worth spending a little extra money on fruits and veggies if it means you will actually eat them!