

# Do You Eat Colorful Foods? Rephrase: Do You Eat Colorful Natural Foods? le Fruity Pebbles DO NOT Count :)



**The most vibrantly colored fruits and vegetables are the richest in vitamins, minerals, fiber and antioxidants.** Fruits and vegetables get their coloration from phytochemicals, natural bioactive compounds which, in addition to giving many fruits and veggies their eye-catching hues, also promote good health. They protect the plant from threats in their natural environment such as disease and excessive sun. According Harvard Health adding color to your meals will help you live a longer, healthier life by protecting your immune system. They go on to suggest when humans eat plant foods, phytonutrients protect us from chronic diseases. Epidemiological research (population studies) suggests that food patterns that include fruits and vegetables are associated with a reduced risk of many chronic diseases, including cardiovascular disease, and may be protective against certain types of cancers.

**DO NOT PEEL. NO COLOR IS SUPERIOR. Try to eat two at a time 3 x a day. Frozen counts and are just as nutritious as fresh. Canned is acceptable as long as no added sugar and salt. Instead of just salads try vegetable soups or stirfrys.**

According to Harvard Health and the Mayo Clinic each color provides various health benefits and no one color is superior to another, which is why a balance of all colors is most important. Getting the most phytonutrients also means eating the colorful skins, the richest sources of the phytonutrients, along with the paler flesh. Try to avoid peeling foods like apples, peaches and eggplant, lest you lose their most concentrated source of beneficial chemicals.

The American Cancer Society recommends 2 1/2 cups per day of fruits and vegetables. US Dietary Guidelines recommend consuming even more: 2 1/2 cups of vegetables and 2 cups of fruit, based on a 2,000-calorie diet.

## GET YOUR COLORS - Each color has benefits

From Harvard Health

**Red:** Rich in the carotenoid lycopene, a potent scavenger of gene-damaging free radicals - protect against prostate cancer as well as heart and lung disease.

Found in: strawberries, cranberries, raspberries, tomatoes, cherries, apples, beets, watermelon, red grapes, red peppers, red onions

**Orange and yellow:** Provide beta cryptoxanthin, which supports intracellular communication and may help prevent heart disease.

Found in: carrots, sweet potatoes, yellow peppers, oranges, bananas, pineapple, tangerines, mango, pumpkin, apricots, winter squash (butternut, acorn), peaches, cantaloupe, corn

**Green:** These foods are rich in cancer-blocking chemicals, which inhibit the action of carcinogens (Found in: spinach, avocados, asparagus, artichokes, broccoli, alfalfa sprouts, kale, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, kiwi fruit, collard greens, green tea, green herbs (mint, rosemary, sage, thyme, and basil)

**Blue and purple:** Have powerful antioxidants called anthocyanins believed to delay cellular aging and help the heart by blocking the formation of blood clots.

Found in: blueberries, blackberries, elderberries, Concord grapes, raisins, eggplant, plums, figs, prunes, lavender, purple cabbage

**White and brown:** The onion family contains allicin, which has anti-tumor properties. Other foods in this group contain antioxidant flavonoids like quercetin and kaempferol.

Found in: onions, cauliflower, garlic, leeks, parsnips, daikon radish, mushrooms