

# Nurses Notes on Nutrition

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This news letter features the **Food Group: Vegetables**. You can go to [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov) for a wealth of learning about foods, nutrition, healthy weights etc.

**Vegetables** - One of nature's most tasty vitamin "pills" is fresh, frozen, dried or canned vegetables or fruits in their own juice. Vegetables are good sources of vitamins A and C, carbohydrates, and fiber. The body cannot manufacture vitamins on its own.

Vitamin A is found in deep green, yellow and orange fruits and vegetables. It is good for prevention of night blindness, promotes bone and growth development, and keeps skin and mucous membranes healthy. Sources of Vitamin A are: broccoli, carrots, pumpkin, dark green leafy vegetables such as spinach, kale, collard greens; orange vegetables like carrots, sweet potatoes, and squash, (fruits such as apricots and cantaloupe).

Vitamin C is needed to maintain bone, cartilage, teeth and skin. Good sources of vitamin C are: broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, and green pepper, (fruits such as citrus, berries, kiwi, and melons).

Phytochemicals in plants help to protect them from the sunlight. In humans, these seem to help block the formation of cancerous tumors. These compounds are not found in pills, so eating a diet ample in fruits and vegetables is essential.

Carbohydrates are the major source of calories the body uses to provide energy for work, cell maintenance and heat.

Fiber is important because it may decrease the risk of coronary heart disease, cardiovascular disease, cancer, bowel related disorders, gallbladder disease, and obesity.

It is recommended to have at least **3 to 5 servings of vegetables a day**, each about the size of a potato. Try eating a large salad at lunch and a few vegetables at dinner to meet your intake and develop a good eating habit.

Vegetables can add a rainbow of color to your plate! See what colors of the rainbow you can eat today!!

(Sources: [www.mypyramid.gov](http://www.mypyramid.gov); [www.beef.org](http://www.beef.org); National Dairy Council; Virginia Cooperative Extension; Teaching Today's Health, 7<sup>th</sup> Ed., D. Anspaugh and G. Ezell 2004; Fitness and Wellness, 6<sup>th</sup> Ed., W. Hoeger and S. Hoeger, 2005)