

10-2003

# Eat Your Veggies!

Winston J. Craig  
*Andrews University*, [wcraig@andrews.edu](mailto:wcraig@andrews.edu)

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## Recommended Citation

Craig, Winston J., "Eat Your Veggies!" (2003). *Lake Union Herald*. 769.  
<https://digitalcommons.andrews.edu/luh-pubs/769>

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# Healthy Choices

## Eat Your Veggies!

**M**other was right all along. It really is a good idea to eat our vegetables. Unfortunately, we don't eat enough of them. The latest survey revealed that Americans eat, on average, only one serving of green vegetables every *five* days. Many vegetables are recognized as a good source of calcium; iron; vitamins A, C, and K; folic acid; fiber; and many health-promoting phytochemicals.

Health organizations recommend we consume at least three servings of vegetables and two servings of fruit *every* day. The highly colored fruits and vegetables such as broccoli, carrots, tomatoes, pumpkin, bell peppers, red grapes, mangoes, apricots, peaches, and citrus are rich in pigments such as carotenoids, flavonoids, and other powerful antioxidants. Cabbage, cauliflower, brussels sprouts, and broccoli are all rich in indoles and isothiocyanates which protect us against colon and other cancers. A regular intake (six or more servings per week) of tomatoes, which are rich in lycopene, can decrease the risk of prostate cancer in men by 40 percent.

Overall, a high intake of vegetables, either raw or cooked, is known to significantly reduce our risk of cancer by about 50 percent. Adding a raw salad to our diet every day can reduce the risk of coronary heart disease mortality by 26 percent. Furthermore, three or more servings per day of fruits and vegetables was shown to reduce the risk of stroke mortality by 42 percent, the risk of cardiovascular mortality by 27 percent, and the risk of all-cause mortality by 15 percent.

Canned or frozen vegetables can be used whenever fresh vegetables are unavailable. Variety is important since the

### Ways to enhance your diet using more vegetables:

1. Eat at least one colored vegetable every day.
2. Enjoy a raw salad composed of three or more vegetables every day.
3. Eat a member of the cabbage family at least three times per week.
4. Don't compromise the nutritional quality of your vegetables by overcooking.
5. Select fresh vegetables in season whenever possible.

different vegetables contain different health-promoting substances. Everyone should become acquainted with the special value of fruits and vegetables fresh from the orchard and garden (Ellen G. White, *Counsels on Diet and Foods*, p. 321).

Winston J. Craig, Ph.D., R.D., Andrews University professor of nutrition

