

# Veggie Up Your Diet:

## Easy Tips to Increase Vegetable Intake



Currently, the average American consumes approximately 1 cup of vegetables per day,<sup>1</sup> falling well short of the 2005 Dietary Guidelines that recommend a minimum of 2.5 cups for adults. Convenience, price, and fear of spoilage are at the top when consumers list reasons for not eating more vegetables. You can help consumers by suggesting ways to make preparing and enjoying vegetables more realistic. Use these fun and easy tips to motivate consumers to **veggie up their diets!**

### ***Be Prepared! Carving out time for prep work on the weekend can go a long way during the week!***

- After grocery shopping, wash, chop, and wrap up vegetables to give yourself a head start on weeknight meals.
- Double the vegetables you prepare for dinner and use the leftovers in meals the next day.
- For breakfast, roll scrambled eggs and leftover vegetables like peppers, potatoes, or broccoli into a tortilla.
- Stuff leftover asparagus or peas with sliced turkey and cheese into a pita or toss into a salad for lunch.
- Roast for flavor. Toss cubed potatoes, peppers, onions and your favorite spices with olive oil and roast at 400°F in the oven for an hour. Make a big batch for use in multiple dishes.

### ***Did you laugh when you heard “carving out time for prep work”? If so, then these quick to the table tips are for you.***

- Stock your pantry and freezer with frozen and canned vegetables for quick additions to meals.
- Microwave “steam-in-the-bag” vegetables as a side to boost the nutrition of take-out or freezer meals.
- Make a large batch of soup using chicken stock, canned beans, and frozen produce. Then freeze individual portions for weekday lunches. Just pull one out and reheat.
- Store your “ready to eat” vegetables like baby carrots at eye-level in the refrigerator making it easy to remember them for snacking or to simply throw into pastas, casseroles, or stir-fry.



Increasing vegetable consumption is especially important for children as 96% are not meeting their recommended daily levels of 1 cup for toddlers and up to 3 cups for teens. Despite the fact that over a quarter of parents believe it is more likely that their child will become president than eat the recommended servings of vegetables<sup>2</sup>, it is possible!

### ***Make it a game! Kids are more likely to eat vegetables they have helped to purchase or prepare.***

- Have your child pick a vegetable at the grocery store they've never tried and prepare it together for dinner.
- Create a tally and see who in the family can eat the most vegetables each week then choose a fun reward like a new book or trip to the movies.

### ***Sneaking it in really works!***

- Cook and puree vegetables like carrots or cauliflower and add into pasta sauce or use to thicken soups.
- Create sandwich spreads by adding finely diced veggies like red peppers or peas to mayonnaise.
- Mix their favorite vegetable in with something you'd like them to try, like adding broccoli to mashed potatoes.

### ***Let the cartoons do the talking!***

- Nearly 7 out of 10 kids say they would eat their veggies if the advice came from their favorite cartoon character. Green Giant now has kid-friendly packages of frozen vegetables featuring SpongeBob SquarePants®, Dora the Explorer® and Go, Diego, Go!™.

### ***For those who are computer savvy...***

- Not sure what to do with that last bit of asparagus? Find a recipe for specific vegetables in the recipe section at [www.FruitsAndVeggiesMatter.gov](http://www.FruitsAndVeggiesMatter.gov).
- Visit [www.EatBetterAmerica.com](http://www.EatBetterAmerica.com) for recipe ideas, cooking techniques, and nutrition advice.
- Check out [www.MightyGiants.com](http://www.MightyGiants.com) for fun activities for kids that encourage them to eat more vegetables.
- Visit [www.GreenGiant.com](http://www.GreenGiant.com) and click on "Stir-In Ideas" to help spice up your frozen vegetables.

<sup>1</sup> State of the Plate 2005: Study on America's Consumption of Fruits and Vegetables, Produce for Better Health Foundation, 2005.

<sup>2</sup> Jolly Green Giant Newsworthy Analysis, Kelton Research, July, 2007.

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