

## Six Ways To Get More Veggies In Your Diet

By Andrea Holwegner BSc, RD

Many people fall short in getting enough vegetables for good health. Here are some practical ways to get you eating (and enjoying) more veggies:

### 1. Change how you plan supper

- When I ask my clients what they're having for dinner later that day, they often don't have a clue. Those without a plan hardly ever say grilled asparagus or Greek salad first. Protein rich foods such as steak or fish usually come to mind; vegetables are afterthoughts.
- Plan the veggies in your meal first; that's where you'll focus most of your time and attention in preparation.



### 2. Increase frequency to boost volume

- The more times throughout the day you eat veggies, the greater the chance you'll eat more.
- Give yourself at least two opportunities – at lunch, for an afternoon snack and again at supper. People rarely eat enough veggies if they try to cram in a day's worth at supper.

### 3. Supersize your veggie portions

- While supersized portions are typically viewed in a negative light, veggies are the exception.
- If you're not eating enough of them, the single most important thing you need to do is each time you eat a vegetable simply eat more of it.
- At the same time, eat a variety of vegetables.
- I recommend that my adult clients aim for a half plate of veggies at supper; to achieve this, you likely need to serve two different kinds. If you're like me, eating a half plate of





steamed peas is unlikely. Instead, a few peas and some sliced cucumbers might help you get there.

#### 4. Change the order of how you eat

- Try this experiment at home: Serve a salad or plate of raw veggies and dip at the beginning of the meal rather than with the meal or at the end of it. I'll bet everyone will eat more vegetables – and enjoy them.
- Or, try my dad's strategy: eat your steamed veggies first when they're hot and your appetite is highest.

#### 5. Switch up your salads

- Don't enjoy salads? If you don't make at least a dozen different types, I'll bet you're bored with salad. Try a variety of leafy greens, but don't forget that a salad can be marinated vegetables or just tomatoes and avocado.
- Sample salads from different cuisines, like an Asian one with grated carrots, cucumbers, crushed nuts and a sesame-soy dressing.
- Learn how to make homemade vinaigrette salad dressings. Their taste and nutrition are superior to commercially prepared options and they've converted many of my clients into avid salad eaters.

#### 6. Try the two-by-two rule

- I often encourage my clients to follow a strategy I dub the two-by-two rule: aim to include two different veggies twice a day.
- For example, at lunch add a spinach salad with tomatoes and at supper make a stir-fry with snow peas and red peppers. Or, nibble raw carrots and broccoli with hummus for an afternoon snack and enjoy grilled asparagus and Greek salad for supper.

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