

“Go vegetable heavy. Reverse the psychology of your plate by making meat the side dish and vegetables the main course.” – Bobby Flay



Blue Zones Project recommends eating as wide a variety of vegetables as you can. It's called the Power 9 principle "Plant Slant," where your only goal is to try to eat more fruits and veggies throughout your day. Ideally, try to eat five servings a day. National Eat Your Veggies Day in June 17. GETTY IMAGES

Mom was right: Eat more veggies

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Your mother was right: You should eat more veggies.

But, among all the competing diets, the changing recommended amounts and an over-abundance of nutritional information, this message has gotten lost, or at least more confusing.

The Blue Zones Project wants to make it simple again. Try to eat as wide a variety of vegetables as you can. That's it. It's called the Power 9 principle "Plant Slant," where a goal is to try to eat more fruits and veggies throughout your day.

Ideally, you want to try to eat five servings a day. To help you do this, we've come up with a few tips in preparation of June 17, National Eat Your Veggies Day.

1. Find faster ways to cook. Grocery stores like Wynn's Market, Publix, Lucky's and others all offer grab and go sections with healthy meal options. You can also choose frozen vegetables, so you don't have to worry about them going bad as quickly. Steam-in-the-bag are other quick options.

2. Smoothies. Talk about a way to pack a punch! Smoothies are

one of the easiest ways to consume a large amount of fruits and vegetables without a lot of effort. For those of us rushing to get out the door in the morning, it also provides a healthy breakfast that travels easily. All you need is a blender.

3. Meal Prep. Cutting up vegetables on a Sunday (or when you get home from grocery shopping) will save you time later. Sometimes, just the thought of cutting up vegetables and the time it takes to do this, is enough to deter us from cooking them at all. If you prep them ahead of time, all you have to do is toss them in a bowl and sauté.

4. Go seasonal. Since we live in Florida and have access to fresh fruit and vegetables year-round, it's unusual for us to stop and think about which vegetables are best in which season. However, this is one way to maximize the freshness and overall taste. Going to a Farmer's Market is a great way to determine what's in season, and to find reasonable priced produce.

5. Vary your veggies. Change it and up, discover new tastes. Replace white rice with cauliflower rice, find a recipe for butternut squash pancakes, bake muffins with zucchini and carrots...there are endless possibilities. The best part is, vegetables don't take very long to cook. So, your meal is varied, delicious and quick.