

# Colourful Eating

With the theme of 'Colourful Eating' for Well Child/Tamariki Ora Week this year, it is another opportunity to focus on the variety and goodness available in fruits and vegetables. There is often the concern that children aren't eating enough fruit and vegetables.

## How Much Should Your Child Be Eating?

5+ a Day or 'Strive for Five for Under Fives' are easy ways to remember how many serves of fruit and vegetables to eat each day. A serve is a handful, with everyone using their own hand. This means that your child's serve will be a lot smaller than your own. Even if your child is reluctant to eat vegetables encourage a good intake of fruit (at least 2 serves a day). Look out for any hidden vegetables such as onions in the meatballs, a slice of tomato in the sandwich.

**REMEMBER, some intake is better than none. The important thing is to keep trying to introduce variety and not give up on foods a child rejects once or twice.**

## Why Colourful Eating?

Colourful fruit and vegetables contain a wide variety of vitamins, minerals and phytochemicals (fight-o-chemicals) which help maintain good health and energy. The mix of nutrients varies depending on the colour. For example GREEN fruits and vegetables have nutrients that are particularly good for vision and strong bones and teeth while RED varieties help with memory function. Making time with your child to check off the colours they have eaten during the day can be a fun way of adding variety to their diet.

## Being Positive About Vegetables

- Lead by example – Attitudes towards vegetables are caught not taught! Make sure your child sees you eating and enjoying different vegetables
- Involve the children – Children will be much more interested if they are involved with selecting, preparing, cooking and serving vegetables
- Same food for all the family – If you make something you suspect your child may not like (strong or spicy flavours) give them a small amount.
- Remember children may need to try a new food eight to ten times before they like it.
- Start with a known favourite – when you find a sauce that your child likes use the same sauce over other vegetables. Potato wedges are usually a hit with children. Using the same cooking technique add kumara, parsnip or pumpkin wedges.

**REMEMBER: Don't restrict your child's food to just the fruits and vegetables they like. Keep serving a variety.**

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## Healthy Nibbles for Tots

Nutrition and physical activity Information for Under 5s

For more information visit: [www.cph.co.nz](http://www.cph.co.nz)

Date: May 2005

Code/Reference: NUT0022I

Authorised by: Nutrition and Physical Activity Team