



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Eat Well

Disparities in State-Specific Adult Fruit and Vegetable Consumption – United States, 2015

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[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Dr. Kathleen Dooling] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Kathleen Dooling.

From a very young age, we're encouraged to eat fruits and vegetables. Unfortunately, many Americans are not getting the message.

Dr. Seung Hee Lee-Kwan is with CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion. She's joining us today to discuss the importance of eating enough fruits and vegetables. Welcome to the show, Seung Hee.

[Dr. Lee-Kwan] Thank you for having me.

[Dr. Dooling] Seung Hee, what is the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables?

[Dr. Lee-Kwan] The federal guidelines recommend that adults consume at least one and a half cups to two cups of fruit and two to three cups of vegetables each day. This is for adults who get less than thirty minutes of physical activity a day. Adults who are more physically active need more calories and thus should be eating more fruits and vegetables. One cup is about 12 strawberries or one large tomato.

[Dr. Dooling] How many people consume the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables?

[Dr. Lee-Kwan] We found that very few adults are getting enough fruits and vegetables. Just 12 percent are eating the recommended amount of fruits and less than one in 10 eat enough vegetables. And consumption is lower among men, young adults, and adults living in poverty.

[Dr. Dooling] Why is eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables so important?

[Dr. Lee-Kwan] Eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables can help with three things. One, it can reduce the risk of many leading causes of illness and deaths, such as heart disease, type 2 diabetes, some cancers, and even obesity. It can also add important nutrients that are commonly missing in Americans diet, and it can help with weight management if adults consume fruits and vegetables instead of other calorie-dense foods.

[Dr. Dooling] How can we meet the recommended daily intake of fruits and vegetables?

[Dr. Lee-Kwan] Try to fill half of your plate with fruits or vegetables at each meal or every eating occasion. Making fruits and vegetables the focal point of your meal will help you meet your recommendations. For example, recent studies have shown that adults get most of their fruit during breakfast and snacks, so you can try adding berries to your morning oatmeal or grab a piece of fresh fruit as an afternoon snack. For vegetables, most adults eat them at dinner, so try adding more into your lunch by adding a side salad or packing a snack of baby carrots or grape tomatoes.

[Dr. Dooling] Are canned or frozen products just as good as fresh?

[Dr. Lee-Kwan] All forms of fruits and vegetables count towards meeting the recommendations. For the most health benefits, make sure that the fruits and vegetables you consume have a limited amount of salt, butter, sugar, or creamy sauces. When selecting canned fruits, choose the ones with lowest sugars. And for canned or frozen vegetables, choose those lower in sodium.

[Dr. Dooling] Where can listeners get more information about eating a healthy diet?

[Dr. Lee-Kwan] Listeners can go to cdc.gov/nutrition or choose MyPlate.gov.

[Dr. Dooling] Thanks, Seung Hee. I've been talking today with Dr. Seung Hee Lee-Kwan about the importance of eating a healthy diet.

Eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables can help reduce the risk of many leading causes of illness and death, and add important nutrients to your diet. Make sure you're eating enough.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Kathleen Dooling for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.