

# How Many Cups Do I Need?

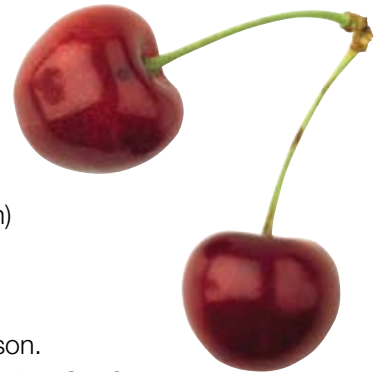
## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the lesson, participants will be able to:

- Identify the recommended cups of fruits and vegetables they should eat each day for good health.
- Recognize how different quantities of fruits and vegetables add up to the recommended daily amount.
- Recognize the role that fruits and vegetables play in reducing their risk of certain chronic diseases.
- Recognize fruit and vegetable consumption as an important element of a healthy lifestyle.
- Use the *Fruit and Vegetable Scoreboard* handout to track their progress toward meeting their recommended cups of fruits and vegetables.

## MATERIALS

- The *Recommended Cups of Fruits and Vegetables for Adults* handout (p. H – 1)
- The *What's in a Cup?* handout (p. H – 2)
- The *Health Benefits of Eating Fruits and Vegetables* handout (p. H – 3)
- The *Fruit and Vegetable Scoreboard* handout (p. H – 4)
- The *Energize Your Body with Fruits and Vegetables!* poster (English and Spanish)



## PREPARATION

1. Become familiar with the content of each handout prior to implementing the lesson. Photocopy the *Recommended Cups of Fruits and Vegetables for Adults*, *What's in a Cup?*, *Health Benefits of Eating Fruits and Vegetables*, and *Fruit and Vegetable Scoreboard* handouts for each participant.
2. Display the English and Spanish *Energize Your Body with Fruits and Vegetables!* poster.

## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Distribute the *Recommended Cups of Fruits and Vegetables for Adults* handout to each participant.
2. Review the handout with the class, and explain that adults should eat 3½ to 6½ cups of fruits and vegetables every day for

good health. Also explain that the number of cups of fruits and vegetables that they need depends upon their age, gender, and physical activity level. For example, a 30-year-old woman who is physically active for 30 to 60 minutes each day should eat 2 cups of fruits and 2½ cups of vegetables every day.

3. Based on the handout information, ask participants the following questions:
  - How many cups of fruits should you eat every day?
  - How many cups of vegetables should you eat every day?
  - How many total cups of fruits and vegetables should you eat every day?
  - Does eating the recommended cups of fruits and vegetables sound easy or hard? Why?
4. Distribute the *What's in a Cup?* handout to participants. Review the information in the handout and explain that different quantities and types of fruits and vegetables can add up to the recommended 3½ to 6½ cups that adults need every day for good health. Point out that dried, frozen, 100% juice, canned, and fresh fruits and vegetables all count.
5. Introduce the *Energize Your Body with Fruits and Vegetables!* poster to demonstrate different amounts of fruits and vegetables using cupped hands. Have participants use the poster to answer the following questions:
  - What does ½ cup of fruit look like?
  - What does 1 cup of vegetables look like?
6. Ask the participants:

Now that you know what amounts are equal to 1 cup, ½ cup, and ¼ cup, does eating the recommended amount of fruits and vegetables every day seem easier or harder? Why?

## Tips

- Demonstrate how to measure a variety of fresh, frozen, canned, or dried fruits and vegetables using cups and cupped hands.
- Buy the produce samples, or ask your local grocery store or farmers' market to donate them.
- Remember to handle food safely. To learn more about food safety, visit [www.foodsafety.gov](http://www.foodsafety.gov).

7. Distribute the *Health Benefits of Eating Fruits and Vegetables* handout to each participant. Review the information with the class, and have participants share their impressions.
8. Conclude the lesson by distributing the *Fruit and Vegetable Scoreboard* handout. Talk with participants about using the handout to keep track of their progress toward meeting the recommended cups of fruits and vegetables for a week. Direct their attention to the weekly goals section of the handout, and discuss with participants some helpful tips for meeting their stated goals. Talk with them about teaming up with a friend or family member to eat more fruits and vegetables. Mention how social support can make living a healthy lifestyle much easier.

## Expansion Ideas

Photocopy and distribute the *My Meal Plan* handout (p. H – 5) to participants. Have participants plan a day's worth of meals, snacks, and desserts using their recommended amount of fruits and vegetables as a guide. Ask them to share their meal and snack ideas with the group.