

Fruits for Fitness



Fruit has wonderful natural benefits for the human body. Fruits and vegetables contain essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber that may help protect you from chronic diseases. Those who eat more generous amounts of fresh fruit as part of a healthful diet are likely to have reduced risk of chronic diseases, including stroke and perhaps other cardiovascular diseases, and certain cancers.

Dietary fiber, or roughage, is a healthy way to keep our digestive tract moving all by itself. Insoluble fiber absorbs liquid in the intestine which aids our digestion and keeps us feeling satisfied longer. Soluble fiber has a favorable effect on blood lipids and fat metabolism. Fruits are an excellent source of both types of fiber.

Fruits naturally supply us with complex carbohydrates. They provide our body with a steady stream of energy—a bit like a long-distance run! Carbohydrates in sugar, on the other hand, work fast, but only for a short time – like a sprint.

The nutrients in fruit boost our mental powers!

The low glycemic values of most fruits help stabilize our blood sugar, assisting our brain in its processing powers.

We need daily vitamins and minerals to ensure that vital physical processes function properly. The body is unable to produce many vitamins itself and needs to obtain them from food. Fresh fruit is an important source of minerals such as calcium, magnesium, and potassium. Minerals help build up bones and teeth and strengthen connective tissue and muscles as well as blood and nerve cells.

Choose fresh fruit over processed fruits. Again, processed and canned fruits do not have as much fiber or vitamins or minerals as fresh fruit, and many processed and canned fruits are sweetened. The peels have concentrated phytonutrients as well as fiber. Next time you make a fruit pie, pop a few peels in your mouth. Yum!

Though fresh fruit is delicious just as-is, you might try these scrumptious simple recipes from Mayo Clinic to help add fruit to your diet.



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