

STROKE PREVENTION

Cooking Class

Make Fruits and Vegetables the Star of your Meals

The topic for our cooking class this month is the benefits of, and strategies to include, more fruits and vegetables in our diet.

A diet high in fruits and vegetables has been shown to reduce stroke risk (Hu et al., 2014). Many fruits and vegetables are high in potassium which may also help with blood pressure control when eaten regularly.

Fruits and vegetables are high in fibre and nutrients. Often we don't eat enough fruits and vegetables. It is recommended to include 7-10 fruits and vegetables per day. A serving size is generally considered ½ cup or a piece of fruit the size of a tennis ball. A diet high in fruits and vegetables helps you get to the general fibre recommendation of 25 grams daily. Don't forget- fresh, frozen, canned are all great choices.

Consider ways to add fruits and vegetables to your meals:

- At supper try to include vegetables on half your plate.
- If you are making a soup add extra vegetables.
- If you are having cereal for breakfast add berries.
- If you are having a sandwich at lunch add tomato and have cut up fruit or vegetables on the side.
- It is handy to have fruits and vegetables cut up in the fridge so they are ready to eat as needed. Have a container of carrots, celery and cucumber already sliced so it's easy to pull out and add to a meal.

This Month's Recipes

Fruits and vegetables are the star in this month's breakfast, lunch and supper recipes.

The breakfast recipe is a **smoothie**.

At breakfast we want to include a good source of protein. Adults, especially older adults need an average of 20 g protein per meal. Breakfast is often low in protein. This recipe is packed with fruits, vegetables, protein and a whole grain.

The lunch recipe is a **turkey chili**.

This is a great recipe to make ahead and freeze for later use. Swap out your usual canned soup or meat sandwich for something higher in fibre and protein such as this chili recipe. We used turkey instead of beef and added beans to make this meal lower in saturated fat and higher in fibre. We also added lots of vegetables to the recipe so it's a complete meal.

The supper recipe is a **buddha bowl**, it had rave reviews at a past cooking class so we're bringing it back for new members to enjoy. This recipe is a nutritious complete meal featuring spinach, carrots, and red peppers. You can adapt it by using vegetables that you have on hand or that you prefer. The components can be made in advance and combined before serving.



References:

Hu, D., Huang, J., Wang, Y., Zhang, D., & Qu, Y. (2014). Fruits and vegetables consumption and risk of stroke: a meta-analysis of prospective cohort studies. *Stroke*, 45(6), 1613-1619.