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NEWS RELEASE September
Fruits & Veggies – More Matters

Do you believe you eat enough servings of vegetables and fruit each day to maintain your best health and protect against disease? If you are a typical New Yorker, the federal Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) says you may be falling short of what you need. Most New Yorkers do not eat the recommended number of servings of vegetables and fruits. Eating more vegetables and fruit as part of a healthy diet helps control weight and reduce the risk of chronic diseases including heart disease, stroke, diabetes and some types of cancer.

During September the CDC and private partnerships of the Fruits and Veggies – More Matters initiative are raising awareness that healthful nutrition is one of the best things you can do for yourself. Fruits & Veggies – More Matters is the next generation of the CDC’s Five-A-Day program to encourage eating vegetables and fruits at every meal.

The new initiative was unveiled this year to be consistent with the latest federal Dietary Guidelines for Americans which recommends various servings of vegetables and fruits depending on an individual’s calorie needs, ranging from 5 to 13 servings, or 2 to 6.5 cups per day.

“The message is intentionally simple and attainable. Most people benefit from eating more vegetables and fruit every day,” according to Diane Cusworth Director of the Otsego County Department of Health. “To get a healthy variety, think color. Eating vegetables and fruit of different colors gives your body a wide range of valuable nutrients, like fiber, folate, potassium and vitamins A and C. Some examples include green spinach, orange sweet potatoes, black beans, yellow corn, purple plums, red watermelon, or white onions. For more variety, try new vegetables and fruits regularly,” she said.

Men, women and children of different age groups each have their own vegetable and fruit needs. Teenage boys and men need at least nine daily servings. Children, teen girls and active women need at least seven, Children age two to six should eat at least five daily servings. To learn how many vegetables you need, see the chart of individual needs at the CDC web site www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov.

A serving is smaller than you may think. One serving should fit in the palm of your hand. For example, a serving can be one medium fruit, ½ cup of raw or cooked vegetables, ¾ cup (6 oz) of 100 percent fruit or vegetable juice, ½ cup of beans, ¼ cup of dried fruit, or one cup of raw, leafy greens.

Here are some easy ways to fill your day with vegetables and fruits as part of healthy meals:

Stir low-fat or fat-free granola into a bowl of low-fat or fat-free yogurt. Top with sliced apples or frozen berries.

Add vegetables, such as diced tomatoes and onions, to your egg or egg white omelet.

Have some fruit as a midmorning snack.

Munch on raw vegetables with a healthy low-fat or fat-free dip.

Put grapes and banana slices on wooden skewers and freeze for “fruit on a stick.”

Add frozen vegetables to a casserole or pasta. Try broccoli, peas and corn.

Ask for more vegetable toppings (like broccoli and spinach) and less cheese on your pizza.

For more information, visit on-line at www.nyhealth.gov or call:

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