



WELCOME TO THE PERS Fruit and Veggie Challenge

Congratulations! You are about to embark on an adventure to liven up your daily meals and snacks and to improve your health.

Even though Americans are busier than ever, it is possible to eat healthfully on a busy schedule. This program will help provide you the tools so that eating Fruit and Veggie can be quick and easy – at breakfast, snack time, lunch, in the cafeteria, or on the swing shift.

The PERS Fruit and Veggie Challenge Program consists of this packet of tools to help you discover ways to increase your servings of fruits and vegetables, two educational sessions presented by local nutrition



BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Please help us measure the success of this program by taking a survey. If you don't have access to the Internet at work, contact your worksite Fruit and Veggie Challenge Coordinator for a paper copy. Otherwise,

- ▶ Log on to:
www.ag.ndsu.edu/pers
- ▶ Click on "Pre-Survey".

Once there, please answer the questions. You will also be asked to complete one more short survey at the end of the program. Thank you for your time.



To make the Fruit and Veggie Challenge work for you, keep score

The "Fruit and Veggie Tracking Form" is the only equipment you need to take the challenge. Find your tracking form in this packet.

Keep your tracking form close by and mark the number of the fruits and vegetables you eat during the day. Eat a serving; score a point!

At the end of the program, you may be asked to turn in a copy of your tracking form to your worksite contact person. You may be eligible for a prize drawing.

Look for frequent messages from your PERS Fruit and Veggie site coordinator via email or internal mail. There will be motivational messages, recipes, and Web sites to check out for additional information to help you improve your health. Your worksite coordinator may even arrange for additional incentives, drawings, or prizes to help motivate you to find out for yourself about the positive benefits you will experience by eating more fruits and vegetables.

This project was developed as a partnership between the North Dakota Department of Health, NDSU Extension Service, Healthy North Dakota, and the North Dakota Public Employees Retirement System. Partial funding was provided by the US Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Award Number U50/CCU821342-01. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of CDC.

Get Ready

for the PERS Fruit and Veggie Challenge!

In the PERS Fruit and Veggie Challenge Challenge, you don't compete with anyone else (unless you want to); it's a personal challenge. For most people, measured, steady progress toward a personalized goal is the right way to make long-term lifestyle changes that stick. To make the Challenge work for you, the following steps will help you set a personal goal for the number of fruits and vegetables you would like to consume daily.



First, Find Your Baseline

To help you set a realistic, personalized goal, consider your baseline—the number of servings of fruits and vegetables you are eating as of today.

Write down the number of fruit and vegetable servings you eat each day for five days. At the end of five days, average the number of fruit and vegetable servings per day. This is your baseline number of servings. Record it here:

My Baseline: _____

Second, Take Stock

Ask yourself a few questions that will help you take stock of your current habits:

- ◀ What are my 5 favorite vegetables? Fruits?
- ◀ Does the main cook in my life (yourself, your spouse or partner, etc.) know ways to prepare vegetables (fruits) the way I like them?
- ◀ Does the main food shopper in my life know how to shop for fresh vegetables and fruits?
- ◀ Is there space to store fresh or frozen vegetables and fruits at home? At work?
- ◀ Am I more likely to eat vegetables (a) in soup or stew, (b) on noodles, rice, pasta or pizza, (c) as a cooked side dish, (d) raw in a salad, or (e) as a snack?
- ◀ Am I more likely to eat fruits in a salad, as a snack, or for dessert?
- ◀ Do I have access to fruits and/or vegetables at work? If not, what can I do to change that?

Now take a few minutes and try to think of ways to change your habits or to help the main food shopper in the house help you reach your goals. Jot those down here:



Third, Set Your Goal

More is better! Every serving you add to your baseline, whether that baseline is 0 or 5, contributes to better health. Using the information about your habits, decide how easy it will be to eat vegetables and fruit more often. Combine this information with your baseline and pick a goal number for the first week. Are you...

- ◀ Currently eating 1 serving a day? Do you think you could eat 2 servings a day next week, and 3 servings the following week?
- ◀ Currently eating 3 servings a day? Do you think you could 'strive for five'?

Now, set a realistic daily goal for Week 1 and record it here and also on the Fruit and Veggie Tracking Form.

My Goal: _____

Consider increasing your goal for each week of the four week program. Keep your goals in mind as you strive for better health by increasing your servings of fruits and vegetables.