8 Great Ways to Serve Up

More Fruits and Vegetables

❶ **KEEP IT RAW.** Most vegetables taste great raw. Try a low-fat dip with whole green beans, cut kohlrabi, raw cauliflower, sugarsnap peas, broccoli, assorted bell peppers, baby zucchini, turnip sticks and rutabaga pieces. Think beyond carrot and celery sticks.

❷ **THINK GREEN.** Green up your salads by adding spinach, watercress, romaine or other dark greens. Select baby varieties for milder flavors. Toss in fruit slices, such as oranges, apples and pears, or add a burst of flavor with berries, like blueberries, raspberries or strawberries.

❸ **CREATE COMBOS.** Look for the many varieties of vegetable combinations now available in the frozen food or fresh produce section of your favorite grocery store. Or create your own cooked vegetable combos. Combine different colors, shapes and textures. Make a quick fruit salad by combining an assortment of seasonal fresh fruits.

❹ **STEAM IT.** Steam vegetables using a steamer basket that fits into a saucepan. Or use a special electric vegetable steamer or microwave. Steam dried fruit for a soft, sweet treat.

❺ **STIR-FRY IT.** Stir-fry vegetables in a wok or non-stick skillet using a small amount of canola or peanut oil. Stir-fry gently until vegetables are tender crisp. Squeeze with lemon or lime juice or toss in herbs for added flavor. Stir-fried fruit slices are also delicious and a unique way to serve up a sweet side dish.

❻ **STEAM-FRY IT.** Sauté your favorite vegetables in a small amount of heart-healthy oil. Stir over high heat, stirring constantly, until the color starts to brighten. Reduce heat to medium and add a couple of tablespoons of water. Cover and steam for 3 to 5 additional minutes until tender crisp. Try a combination of caramelized sweet onions and apple slices for a scrumptious treat.

❼ **CARAMELIZE IT.** Caramelize onions, peppers, carrots and other sweeter vegetables by cooking them in a small amount of heart-healthy oil over medium-high heat. Stir frequently, until vegetables are very golden—about 15 to 20 minutes. Caramelize your favorite fruit and serve over low-fat ice cream for a great-tasting dessert.

❽ **GRILL IT.** Cook your favorite vegetables or fruits on the grill. Skewer kabobs, place in foil packs or marinate in your favorite marinade. Marinades are great on fruit, too! You're only limited by your imagination. Combining fruits and vegetables make a "sweet and savory" blend that many top chefs employ when creating gourmet meals.

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For more ideas on adding fruits and vegetables to your diet, visit the National Fruit and Vegetable Program Web site at: HYPERLINK "http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/publications/index.html" http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/publications/index.html.

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