



American Heart Association.

EmPOWERED to Serve™

# Eating Smart with Fruit and Vegetables

## LESSON PLAN

### Call to Action

Eating 2 to 2½ cups (4 to 5 servings) each of fruits and vegetables every day as part of an overall healthy diet pattern may reduce your risk for cardiovascular disease, including heart attack and stroke. Challenge yourself to add ½ cup (one serving) of fruit and vegetables a day. Even adding small amounts is a powerful step toward a healthier, longer life.

### Community Need

Eating fruit and vegetables is a key to good health. But, most of us don't eat enough fruits and vegetables to meet our body's needs.

- About 75% of the U.S. population has an eating pattern that is low in fruits and vegetables.
- Only 1 in 10 adults meets the recommendations for fruit and vegetable consumption. Men, younger adults and people living in poverty eat the fewest.
- In many urban and rural communities, corner stores, convenience stores, bodegas and gas stations are the only places to buy food. These stores may have limited options and/or sell produce that's very expensive. (Community members should be reminded that all forms count toward the daily goal: fresh, frozen, canned and dried. Purchase what's available. Drain and rinse canned fruit to reduce the added sugar and canned vegetables to reduce the sodium.)
- How frequently we eat fruits and vegetables often depends on whether we can buy them locally.
- Neighborhood access to healthy food is a growing concern. Lack of access has a profound effect on diet quality.

### Three Important Points

Our lives are very busy and many of us are on information overload. That's why we'll focus on three key messages:

- Add more color, crunch and flavor to your life with produce. It's a key to good health.
- Embrace ways to snack on a variety of fruits and vegetables and include them in all your daily meals.



- Recognize that fruit and vegetables are vital for good health, but not everyone has access to them. Take action to increase access for your community or surrounding communities.

### Preparing for the Lesson

- Budget at least 30 minutes to present the lesson.
- Review the speaker notes prior to the lesson to be familiar with the information and know what additional resources are used.
- View the YouTube video featured in the lesson at [www.youtube.com/watch?v=DPF5LGzUwRk](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DPF5LGzUwRk)
- If handouts are referenced in the presentation, we recommend distributing the pages prior to beginning the lesson.
- Additional resources are available on the Resources List pdf. These could be added to lengthen the presentation or provide ideas for small group discussion. You may also provide the Resources List pdf to the attendees so they have links to information discussed in the lesson.

### Program Materials

*No access to a computer projector? Print the slides and use them as a script to deliver your health lesson.*

- Flip chart and markers.
- Handouts (one copy per participant):
  - What's a Serving (Fruits and Vegetables)? <http://bit.ly/37rnGUJ>
  - You're the Cure Flyer <http://bit.ly/2Ewcf1X>
- Pens
- Goody bags (optional): Reach out to local businesses, such as hospitals, wellness centers, local clinics and other health organizations. Ask them about donating giveaways for participants. Also, check out the American Heart Association online store (ShopHeart.org).

### Audiovisual Needs

- Projector for PowerPoint slides.
- Internet connection (optional).



### Wrap-Up

Reminder! Once your participants have left, be sure they complete the Ambassador Questionnaire.

### Slide Program with Talking Points and Discussion Questions

The “Presenter’s Notes” section of the PowerPoint presentation includes scripted comments for the lesson. Use these to help walk through the lesson. To engage participants, the talking points also include discussion questions. For your reference, here is a list of the discussion questions:

- How many cups of fruits and vegetables do you eat each day?
- Does 2 to 2½ cups (4 to 5 servings) of fruits *and* of vegetables each day seem like a lot to you? Just right?
- Is there one color that’s easier for you to include?
- Are any of these advocacy ideas of interest to you?