Produce-ing Health

*Eat Better-Increase the Amount and Variety of Fruits and Vegetables You Consume*

Lesson Plan

**Call To Action**

Eat Better-Increase the Amount and Variety of Fruits and Vegetables You Consume

**Community Need**

Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables can help keep you healthy—yet, many of us eat very few fruits and vegetables. According to the State Indicator Report on Fruits and Vegetables, 2013 published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, most adults consume fruit about once a day and vegetables less than two times per day:

- 38 percent of adults and 36 percent of adolescents eat fruit less than once a day.
- 23 percent of adults and 38 percent of adolescents eat veggies less than once a day.

Studies show that the greater your daily intake of fruits and veggies, the lower your risk of heart disease and stroke.

The American Heart Association recommends eating an overall healthy diet, which includes a variety of fruits and vegetables each day. So, eat some at every meal, every day. “Produce-ing Health” reviews the role of fruits and vegetables in overall good health. It also gives community members practical tips on buying and storing produce, as well as strategies for meeting the American Heart Association recommendation.

**Three Important Points**

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

- Fruits and vegetables are key to good health.
- Eat an overall healthy diet, which includes a variety of fruits and vegetables each day.
- Eat fruits and vegetables at every meal.
EmPowered To Serve Health Check
The EmPowered To Serve Health Check is a way for community members to develop an awareness about their blood pressure and current weight. The goal is to get at least 15 percent of your community organization checking these health measures. And then to complete the My Life Check® personal health assessment using your group’s unique URL.

You can conduct this optional EmPowered To Serve health check in various ways:
- Before the program, ask participants to check their blood pressure and weight at home, Higi Station (portable health kiosk) or their doctor’s office.
- Provide a scale and blood pressure machine on site. Ask participants to check their weight and blood pressure before the program gets under way.
- Invite a local healthcare provider or partner with a healthcare organization to check blood pressure and weight for participants at the start of the program.
- If you can host a screening, try to also offer blood glucose and cholesterol checks.

Length of Program
- Budget 1 – 1 ½ hours to present the lesson.
- If you are conducting a health screening, add 20 minutes or more before the meeting for participants to get their blood pressure and weight checked.

Program Materials
No Access to a Slide Projector? Print out the slides and put them in a three-ring binder. Use the printed slides as a script to deliver your health lesson.
- Flip chart and markers.
- Handouts (one copy per participant):
  - Get Fresh with Fruits and Vegetables Infographic.
  - Fruits and Vegetables Can Lower Stroke Infographic.
- Pens
- Goody bags: 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 store (shop.heart.org) for brochures to buy in bulk.

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

Wrap-Up
Reminder! Once your participants have left, be sure to complete the Ambassador Questionnaire. For details, see your Ambassador Guide page 11.
Slide Program with Talking Points and Discussion Questions

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

- Did you know that eating more fruits and vegetables could lower your risk for heart disease, stroke, some cancers and other diseases?
- How many servings of fruits of vegetables do you currently eat each day—more than four? More than three? More than two? One serving or less?
- What are some of your favorite fruit and vegetable recipes?
- Does anyone have additional tips for buying fruits and vegetables?
- What are some tips for getting the most of your grocery budget when buying fruits and vegetables?
- Has anyone gone to a ‘pick your own’ farm or the farmer’s market?
- How did the fruits and/or vegetables compare with those bought at the grocery store?
- Are you surprised about how to store specific fruits and vegetables? Which ones?
- Are there certain colors of fruits that you find harder to include in your diet? [NOTE: Mention Simple Cooking with Heart free recipes.]
- How many of you read the food labels on bottled and canned juices?
- How many read the labels on canned, bagged or packaged fruits?
- Does anyone have a favorite breakfast meal that includes fruits or vegetables?
- What’s your favorite lunch that includes fruits and vegetables?
- What’s your all-time favorite dinner that is loaded with vegetables and fruits?
- Who has roasted fruits or vegetables?
- Any tips for the group based on your experience roasting vegetables?
- What’s your favorite vegetable to dip?
- The goal is how many servings per day of vegetables?
- Which option is best with regard to nutrition: fresh, frozen, dried, juiced or canned?