Go Green

March is National Nutrition Month and also happens to be the month in which we celebrate St. Patrick’s Day. This month is a good time to focus on fruits and vegetables, especially those that are green!

Green vegetables contain certain chemicals such as lutein and indoles, which may have potential antioxidant, health promoting benefits. They can help to lower the risk for some cancers, contribute to increased vision health, strong bones and teeth. You can go green everyday with fruits and vegetables like,

- Avocados
- Green apples
- Green pears
- Limes
- Artichokes
- Asparagus
- Broccoli
- Green beans
- Cucumbers
- Leafy greens
- Green pepper
- Spinach

Green vegetables contain nutrients such as:

- **Fiber:** Diets rich in fiber have been shown to have a number of benefits, including decreased risk of heart disease.
- **Folate:** Essential to women, this nutrient has been shown to reduce a woman’s risk of having a child with a brain or spinal chord defect.
- **Potassium:** This nutrient may help to maintain a healthy blood pressure.
- **Vitamin A:** Vitamin A keeps eyes and skin healthy and helps to prevent against infections.
- **Vitamin C:** This nutrient helps to heal cuts and wounds and keeps teeth and gums healthy.
You can try to include more green fruits and vegetables into you and your children’s diets by:

- Topping cereal with fresh fruit
- Eating fruit as a mid-morning or mid-afternoon snack
- Adding fruit to waffles or pancakes
- Adding vegetables to egg or egg white omelets
- Putting more vegetables and less cheese on pizzas
- Eating more salads with fresh vegetables and fruits
- Adding vegetables to pasta and casseroles
- Adding lettuce and cucumber to sandwiches
- Dipping vegetables into a low-fat or fat-free dip as a snack
- Eating more broth-based soups with vegetables

Source: (www.5aday.org; www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov)