



EAT A RAINBOW!

Why are there so many songs about rainbows? Because they're amazing and beautiful—not just in the sky, but also on the dining table! "Eating a rainbow" helps your body get a complete range of nutrients.

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO EAT A RAINBOW?

- Choosing a variety of different-colored **whole foods** throughout the day and week.
- The more **naturally occurring colors** on your plate at each meal or snack, the better.
- It *does not* mean making a rainbow with artificially colored foods (gummy snacks, soda, popsicles, etc.)

WHAT'S UNDER THE RAINBOW?

| Color | Foods | Possible Nutrients | Supports |
|-------------------|---|---|---|
| Red | apples, red cabbage, red onion, red peppers, strawberries, tomatoes, cherries, watermelon | flavonoids, lycopene, vitamin C, folate | heart health, memory |
| Orange/ Yellow | cantaloupe, carrots, butternut squash, lemons, mango, oranges, papaya, peaches, pineapples, pumpkin, sweet potatoes, yellow peppers | beta-carotene, vitamin A, vitamin C | healthy eyes, heart health, immune function |
| Green | asparagus, bok choy, broccoli, cabbage, collards, cucumbers, grapes, green beans, green peppers, honeydew, kale, peas, spinach | chlorophyll, vitamin K, carotenoids, isothiocyanates, omega-3 fatty acids | healthy bones, teeth and eyes |
| Blue/ Purple | dark beans, eggplant, beets, blueberries, blackberries, figs | anthocyanin | memory and healthy aging |
| White | ginger, jicama, onions, mushrooms | flavonoids | heart health and good cholesterol levels |

THE NUTRITION RAINBOW CONNECTION

Fruits and vegetables get their color from naturally occurring micronutrients—such as vitamins and phytonutrients—which are essential for good health. One key function of these nutrients is **antioxidants**, which include beta-carotene, lutein, lycopene, and vitamins A, C and E. (Not all antioxidants impart color, but eating a colorful range of foods helps you get them all.)



THE RAINBOW DINNER GAME



Step 1

Before dinner, draw a rainbow on a sheet of paper. Bring your drawing, a pencil and some scratch paper to the dining table.

Step 2

Look for a food on the table to match each color on your rainbow. Write down which colors are missing.

Step 3

Make a list of foods that would fill in the missing colors. Then add these to the weekly shopping list.

Bonus

Take your rainbow to school and play this game at lunch with at least 3 friends!

NEXT STEPS:

The Other Side of the Rainbow

Keep food rainbows in the forecast and sustain the kid excitement with these activities:

- **Gradually transition to filling at least half your plate** with colorful veggies at each meal.
- **Pick a color theme of the week.** Get as many fruits and veggies of that color as you can find, then let the whole family taste them all. Add favorites to your regular shopping list.
- **Keep a rainbow diary or calendar.** Let kids write down which colors they eat each day over a period of a week or month and then look back and talk about favorites. Use stickers to make it fun or download the "Today I Tried" Chart at www.todayiatearainbow.com/resources/free-downloads/.
- **Plant colorful vegetables in the yard** so kids can see the rainbow grow from seeds.

TIPS FOR PARENTS

Bring more rainbows to your table with these colorful ideas:

- Put at least **one produce item of each color** on the shopping list every week.
- Buy **what's in season** to enjoy peak flavor and lower prices.
- **Serve produce at peak ripeness.** Some kids reject foods that are under or over ripe. Learn how to pick 'em with the Whole Foods Market® online fruit and vegetable guides www.wholefoodsmarket.com/recipes/food-guides.
- **Rinse fresh fruits and veggies as soon as you get home** so they're ready for kids to grab and eat. Store them within kid reach.
- **Serve up food pictures or sculptures.** Arrange raw fruit and veggie rainbows on plates, thread them onto skewers, or use toothpicks to stick chunks together and create pyramids, faces or funny characters.
- **Let kids play with their food (just a little).** Allowing them to build their own food rainbows and sculptures may inspire children to eat them.
- **Serve a weekly rainbow dinner** with every color represented at one meal.
- **Put a rainbow of foods in their lunch box.** They'll love showing it off and may encourage classmates to eat more colors, too!
- **Serve fresh fruit as dessert.** If your child is used to a lot of sweets, sprinkle on some granola, a drizzle of honey or vanilla yogurt, then over a few weeks transition to just fruit.

QUICK & EASY RECIPES

BREAKFAST

Rainbow Fruit Skewers with Yogurt Dip

1. Choose your favorite fruits (berries, pineapple, kiwi, apples, oranges, etc.) and cut them into equal-size chunks. **2.** Thread them onto wooden skewers. **3.** Dip 'em into nonfat vanilla yogurt or a mix of ½ cup nonfat plain yogurt with 1 teaspoon honey.

LUNCH/SNACK

Eggplant Chips

1 medium eggplant, washed and sliced into ⅛" thick rounds
sea salt
spices (optional)
olive oil

1. Preheat oven to 400 degrees. **2.** Arrange eggplant rounds in a single layer on a large metal baking sheet. **3.** Brush both sides of the eggplant lightly with olive oil. **4.** Sprinkle with salt and any other spices you like. **5.** Bake for 15 minutes, then check for doneness. When eggplant starts to brown on the top, flip it over and brown the other side for another 10–15 minutes. Chips should be crisp and very brown when done. **Tip:** Try them with hummus dip!

Let kids help with the simple steps in **bold!**

DINNER

Rainbow Chili

1 zucchini, sliced
1 yellow squash, sliced
1 red bell pepper, diced
1 jalapeño pepper, minced (optional)
1 onion, diced
4 garlic cloves, minced
1 can crushed tomatoes with liquid
1 can tomato paste
1 can black beans
1 can chili beans
1 can whole kernel corn
1 tablespoon olive oil
1 tablespoon chili powder
½ teaspoon dried oregano
¼ teaspoon cayenne pepper
½ teaspoon ground black pepper

1. Heat oil in a large pot over medium-high heat. Stir in zucchini, yellow squash, bell pepper, jalapeño, onions and garlic. Sauté until tender (about 5 minutes). **2.** Add canned ingredients and reduce heat to a simmer. **3.** Stir in spices and simmer 45–60 minutes, stirring occasionally, until chili reaches desired consistency.

Source: www.todayiatearainbow.com

