



25 WAYS TO GET MORE FRUIT & VEG

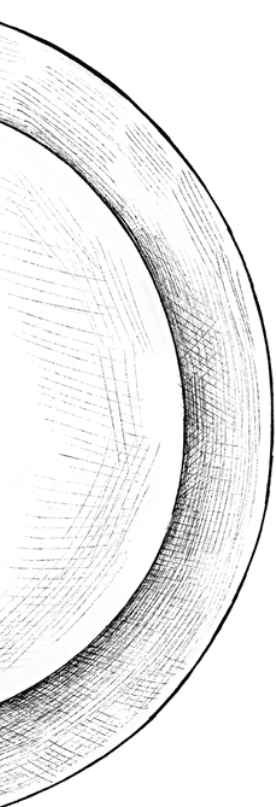


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It can be a challenge to eat five portions of fruit & veg each day even when you like vegetables. Now research tells us that eating 10 portions is what we need to stay healthy for longer.

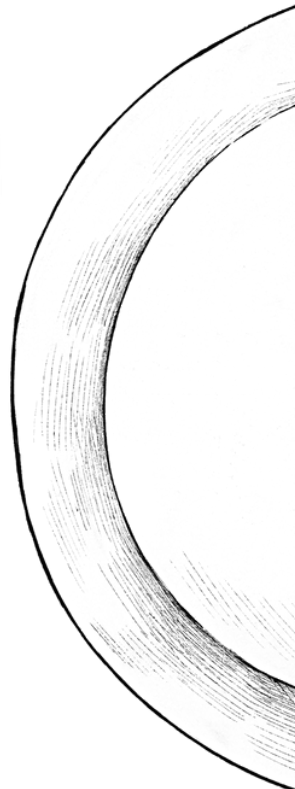
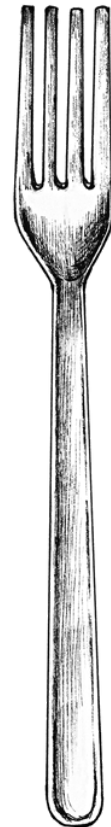
Most people don't come nearly close to having enough, and I bet you're wondering how on earth you're going to manage that. Let me help you. Throughout this guide, I'm going to be sharing some of the tips I use with my clients who want to increase their veggies but don't want to feel they're just staring at half a plate of boiled veg each night. You'll notice, I'm not advocating fruit juices. Juicing removes a lot of the beneficial fibre, which means these can unbalance your blood sugar levels in excess.

Read on for tips on getting more of the good stuff into your life, in a super-easy way



What constitutes a portion?

A portion means 80g (3oz) of fruit or veg - the equivalent of a small banana, a pear or three heaped tablespoons of spinach or peas.





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1. Make a frittata

Perfect for a simple lunch or a lazy weekend brunch, whisk up eggs with veggies like onions, mushrooms and peppers – or anything else you have in the fridge. If you can make this a large, deep, Spanish-style omelette, it will even last you into the week.

2. Make friends with cauliflower rice

Cauli rice has become a bit of a cult thing in the last few years. You can buy it ready-made in practically any supermarket, but it is also very easy to whizz up yourself in a food processor. Simply chop into florets and pulse until the cauliflower is a fine, rice-like consistency. Perfect whenever you might have rice or as a veggie side dish. There are many different ways to make it. My favourite is to drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with sea salt and pepper, then roast in the oven for 15 minutes.

3. Do the same with broccoli

Broccoli rice is the lesser-known relation of cauliflower rice. You prepare it in the exact same way – pulse into rice-sized pieces. You can cook it in a similar fashion, too, but it is good lightly fried with a little coconut oil. Whether cauliflower or broccoli rice, you can add the cooked version to scrambled eggs for (at least) an entire serving of your veg quota.





try this recipe

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4. Pumpkin pancakes or waffles

Waffles and pancakes don't have to be naughty to be nice. Add some pureed pumpkin* to your traditional mix or try this recipe for waffles:

- 120g buckwheat flour
- 1 tbsp baking powder
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1/2 tsp ginger
- 1/2 tsp allspice
- 1/2 tsp nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon
- 1/2 tin of pureed pumpkin
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 2 tbsp flaxseeds
- 2 tbsp maple syrup
- 240ml milk of your choice

Combine buckwheat flour with 1 tbsp baking powder, salt, ginger, allspice, nutmeg and cinnamon. Whisk in the pureed pumpkin, vanilla extract, flaxseeds, maple syrup and milk.

Let the mixture stand for 10 minutes. Heat up the waffle iron or get the skillet on the hob to heat up. Coat the pan or iron with coconut oil, tip in the mix and cook until it bubbles (skillet only) before flipping onto the other side. Perfect served with mashed avocado, smoked salmon and a poached egg.

* pureed pumpkin can be found in the World Foods section of larger supermarkets.

try this recipe

5. Cherry Delight

For a tasty morning smoothie for two, blitz 450g spinach, 270ml water, 1 banana, 100g blueberries, 225g cherries (buy frozen – cheaper and they come pitted)



6. Upgrade your potato

Sweet potatoes have a far greater nutritional value than standard white potatoes. If switching to sweet potato mash is initially too much of a stretch, consider mixing the two to start.

8. Sneak it into family favourites

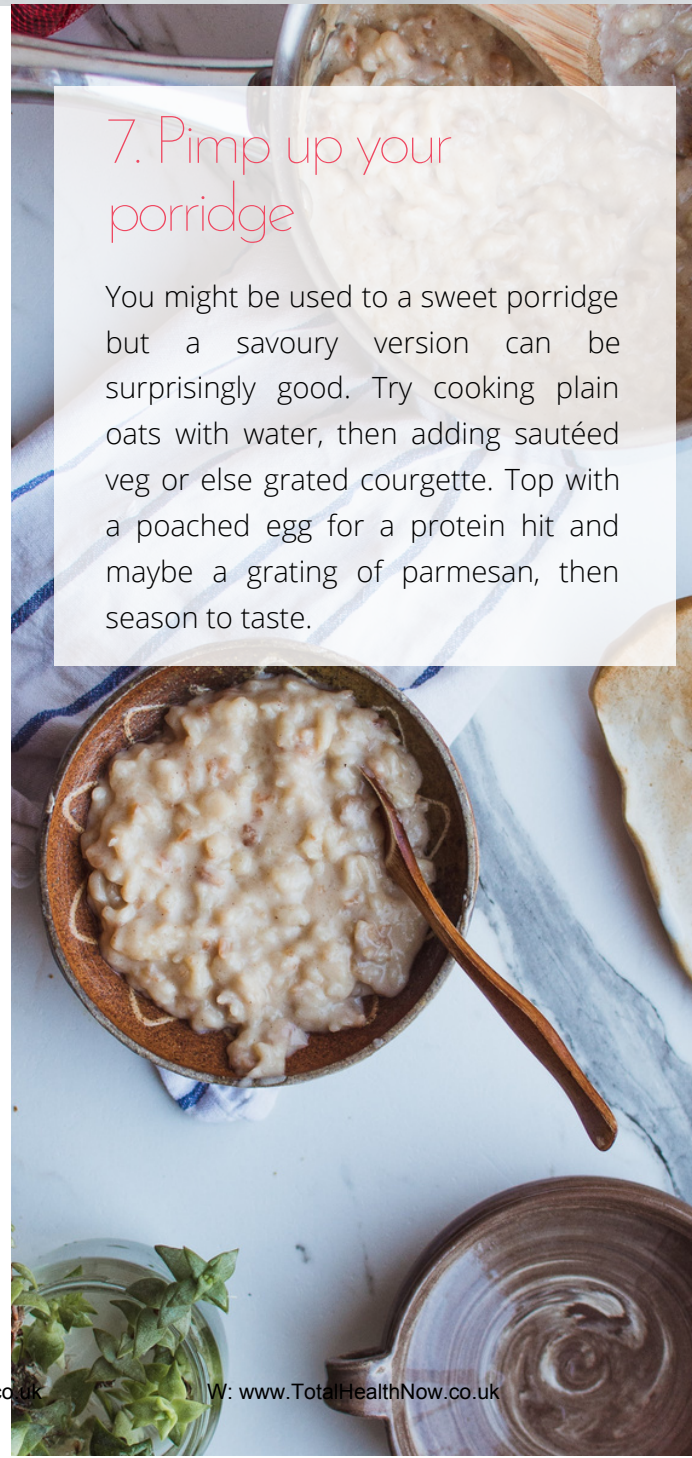
Pasta bakes are the perfect place to hide your vegetables. The ideal partners to throw into the mix are spinach, tomatoes, peas and broccoli but almost anything will do. And, if you cut up mushrooms really really fine, they take on a mince-like texture. No one will notice!

9. Don't forget the herbs

These count as vegetables, too, and are easily incorporated into practically any dish, from soups and stews to scrambled eggs.

7. Pimp up your porridge

You might be used to a sweet porridge but a savoury version can be surprisingly good. Try cooking plain oats with water, then adding sautéed veg or else grated courgette. Top with a poached egg for a protein hit and maybe a grating of parmesan, then season to taste.



10. Beetroot chocolate cake

Beetroot blends totally, utterly and seamlessly into chocolate cake.

You have to make it to believe it. Here is a great recipe to get you started

[click for recipe](#)



11. Avocado baked eggs

Heat the oven to 220°C. Halve an avocado and remove the stone to create a pit for the egg. Put the avocado in a small ceramic baking dish or baking tray. Crack the egg into the hole, sprinkle with paprika, then bake for 15-20 minutes.

12. Sneaky additions

Just like with pasta bakes, casseroles, Bolognese sauce and chilli are all ideal places to smuggle in added vegetables.

Vegetable dodgers will barely notice if you grate carrot, red pepper or courgette, or finely mince mushrooms (which have a surprisingly meaty texture).

13. Experiment with courgetti and boodles

You can get courgetti and boodles (butternut squash noodles) from most supermarkets or make your own with a spiralizer. Blanch for a minute or two then serve with Bolognese or Thai curries – or your own choice of meal. You can also gently fry with olive oil and garlic for a delicious side that takes no time to cook.

14. Swap wraps for lettuce

It might not cut it with the kids but lettuce makes a surprisingly good stand-in for tortilla wraps when you're serving up fajitas. As you get more adventurous, you can also use tougher greens like kale or chard if you fancy but you'll want to blanch and pat dry before you wrap. For now baby gem and Romaine will be your friends.

15. Veggie tomato sauce

Making your own tomato sauce is far healthier than shop-bought varieties. Grate in carrot and finely chop peppers, then add to passata or tinned tomatoes with fresh herbs like basil or oregano, cook over a medium heat to allow all the flavours to infuse, then whiz till smooth. Roasted butternut squash will also do the trick. No one will ever know the difference.

17. Dish up veggie fries

Sometimes you need something resembling a chip. Check out this link for some amazingly easy and delicious ways to serve veggies you will never have thought of before

[recipe](#)

18 Rethink pizza

Not tried cauliflower pizza? You might like it so give it a whirl sometime soon. Another great veg idea for the humble pizza is to spread a layer of pureed spinach on the dough before adding your tomato sauce. Here's a recipe from the Hemsley sisters

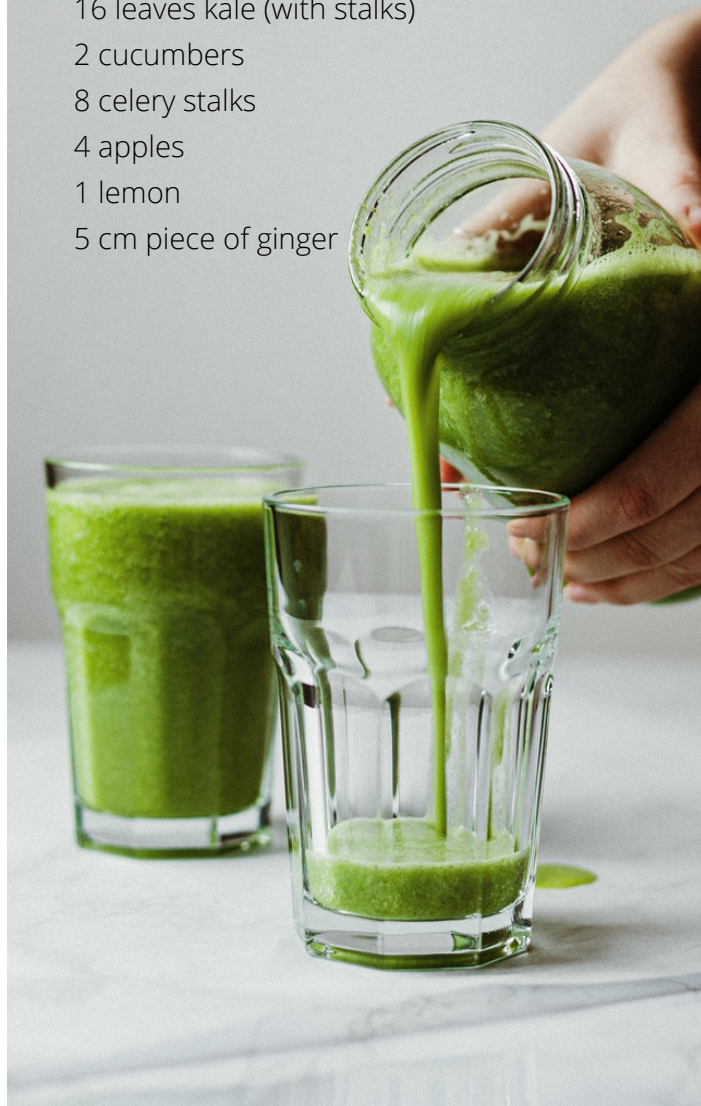
[recipe](#)

16. Combine fruit juice in veg

A green juice for breakfast sets you up for the rest of the day.

Try this one:

- 16 leaves kale (with stalks)
- 2 cucumbers
- 8 celery stalks
- 4 apples
- 1 lemon
- 5 cm piece of ginger



19. Bake them in bread

Veggies are marvellous when used in baking. Courgettes in particular seem to do the job above others. Try this brilliant recipe.

[recipe](#)





try this recipe

20. Kale crisps

You might have tasted the kind you get in bags from some supermarkets. Here's a recipe you will make time and time again.

- 75g cashew nuts
- 1 shallot (chopped)
- 2 tbsp nutritional yeast flakes
- 1/2 tsp garlic salt
- 4 soft large dates (chopped)
- 2 tbsp lemon juice
- 2 tbsp water
- 2 tbsp apple cider vinegar
- 250g bag of kale

Preheat the oven to 150°C. Blend your cashew nuts, shallot, nutritional yeast flakes, garlic salt, dates, lemon juice, water and apple cider vinegar together until you create a thick paste. Add a little more water if you need to. Put your kale in a bowl, add the sauce and massage together with your hands. Place on a lined baking tray and bake for 15-20 minutes. Turn the kale over and bake for a further 5 minutes. Cool. The crisps will keep for 3 days in an airtight container.

21. Don't forget the snacks

Good old veg make for brilliant snacks. Baby carrots, radishes and sugar snap peas don't even need any chopping.



22. Squeeze it into extra portions where you can

If you've been trained to think of dinner as protein, starch and one veg, challenge yourself to improve your life with the addition of one additional vegetable. Whatever you are making, think how can I add another vegetable to this?



23. Fruity lollies

When the summer starts to peep through the clouds. I love these healthy ice lollies made with berries and coconut milk, courtesy of The Medicinal Chef

[recipe](#)



24. Handbag snacks

Apples, pears and satsumas are perfect travelling companions, and teamed with a small handful of nuts, make the perfect blood sugar-balancing snack.

25. Bring in the berries

Berries of any kind are choc-full of inflammation-fighting antioxidants. Add them to granola, muesli or porridge along with a sprinkle of flax for a nutrition boost.