

**For Immediate Release:
March is National Nutrition Month**

From: The Branch-Hillsdale-St. Joseph Community Health Agency

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Color Your Way to 5 A Day For a Healthier YOU!

Growing up you may have been told to eat your greens, but what about your reds, oranges, yellows and blues? By putting something of every color on your plate or in your lunch bag, you are more likely to eat the 5 to 9 recommended servings of vegetables and fruit every day. Nutrition research shows that colorful vegetables and fruit contain essential vitamins, minerals and fiber that your body needs to promote health and help you feel great. Just think: 1 cup of dark, leafy **GREENS**, ½ cup of **RED** tomatoes, ½ cup of **YELLOW** peppers, 6 oz. **ORANGE** juice and ½ cup of **BLUE**berries. And you have 5 A Day! It's quite simple when you Sample the Spectrum.

Reds- Deep reds or bright pinks in your daily diet add lycopene. Lycopene is found in tomatoes, red and pink grapefruit, watermelon, papaya and guava. Diets rich in lycopene are being studied for their ability to fight heart disease and some cancers.

Greens- Spinach, collards, kale and broccoli have antioxidant properties and are being studied for their ability to protect your eyes by keeping your retina strong.

Oranges/Yellows- Sweet potatoes, mangos, carrots, and apricots contain beta-carotene, a natural antioxidant that is being studied for its role in strengthening your immune system. The orange group is rich in Vitamin C and folate, a B vitamin that may help prevent some birth defects and reduce your risk of heart disease. Pineapple is rich with Vitamin C, and corn and pears are high in fiber.

Blues/Purples- The properties that cause the blue coloring in vegetables and fruits are being studied for their role in the body's defense of harmful cancers. Blueberries, in particular, are rich in Vitamin C and folic acid and high in fiber and potassium.

Whites-Vegetables from the onion family, which include garlic, chives, scallions, leeks, and any variety of onion, contain the valuable properties that may;

- Help lower cholesterol and blood pressure and increase the body's ability to fight infections.
- Inhibit cancer growth.
- Reduce the risk of certain cancers

Conclusion – On national surveys, only 1 in five michiganians report eating 5 or more servings of fresh fruits and/or vegetables a day. With heart disease and cancer causing more deaths in our tri-county area than all other causes **combined**, lets make sure we colorize our daily menu so we can live and enjoy life to the fullest.

For more information log onto the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's website, www.cdc.gov or contact Vivian Frudakis at the Community Health Agency at 517-279-9561 ext. 123.

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