Eating fruits and vegetables are critical to having good health. They contain essential vitamins, minerals, and fiber that help protect one from chronic diseases. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2010 recommends that, in general, Americans need to eat more fruits and vegetables. In particular, we need to eat fruits and vegetables with different colors to give the body a wide range of valuable nutrients like fiber, folate, potassium, and vitamins A and C. These include green spinach, oranges, sweet potatoes, black beans, yellow corn, purple plums, red watermelon and white onions.

**Fruit and Vegetable Consumption in Indiana—2009**

**High School Students**
- In 2009, 16.1% of high school students consumed the recommended five or more fruits and vegetables per day [Figure 1].
  - This represented a 21% decrease compared to 2003.

**Adults**
- Fruit and vegetable consumption among adults has remained relatively stable since 1996.
- 20.6% of adults consumed five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day [Figure 1].
- Adults consuming five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day were less likely to be overweight or obese (33.2% versus 38.1%) [Figure 2].
- More females than males consumed five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day (23.7% versus 17.3%).

*Figure 1. Percent of high schools students and adults who consumed five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day, Indiana, 2009*

*Adults are people ages 18 years and older*

Sources: 2009 Indiana YRBS Statewide Survey Data; 2009 Indiana BRFSS Statewide Survey Data
Figure 2. Percent of adults* who reported consuming five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day by weight status, Indiana, 2009

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ate five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day</th>
<th>Overweight or obese</th>
<th>Not overweight or obese</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>38.1%†</td>
<td>61.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No</td>
<td>33.2%</td>
<td>66.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Adults are people ages 18 years and older
† Adults consuming five or more servings of fruits and vegetables per day were statistically less likely to be overweight or obese (P<.05)
Source: 2009 Indiana BRFSS Statewide Survey Data

What Can Be Done To Increase Fruit and Vegetable Consumption?

- Expand access to supermarkets and grocery stores in communities.
- Encourage healthier foods and nutrition services in schools and worksites.
- Support farm to institution programs.
- Expand the number of farmers markets that accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP) benefits electronically and Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) Farmers Market Nutrition Program Coupons.
- Promote food policy councils as a means to improve the food environment at the state and local levels.
- Support and promote community and home gardens.

References and Resources