

Body & Soul

A Celebration of Healthy Eating & Living



A GUIDE FOR YOUR CHURCH

NATIONAL
CANCER
INSTITUTE

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God cares about every aspect of our lives. His Word says:

"Beloved, I wish above all things that thou mayest prosper and be in health, even as thy soul prospereth." (3 John 1:2)

Sadly, many African American church leaders have gone home to the Lord too early in life from diseases that can be prevented. I see them die in their 40s, 50s, and early 60s. This is just when their wisdom and guidance is most needed to instruct the next generation. Brethren, this ought not be!

A healthy diet, along with an active lifestyle, may help us lower our chances of getting diseases such as high blood pressure, stroke, diabetes, heart disease, and some types of cancer. Eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables every day is important for our health.

From the beginning, God knew what kinds of food He wanted us to eat.

"Then God said, 'I give you every seed-bearing plant on the face of the whole earth and every tree that has fruit with seed in it. They will be yours for food.'" (Gen. 1:29)

Join me in embracing Body & Soul, a program for churches that helps members improve their health. Body & Soul helps my congregation eat more fruits and vegetables every day.

Trust me. It is easy to bring healthy eating into the church when you prayerfully and diligently use the program. Doing Body & Soul is a blessing beyond measure.

"Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, who you have received from God?" (1 Corinthians 6:19)



Glovioell Rowland, Ph.D.
Assistant Pastor, Pasadena Church of God
Pasadena, California



“You must start at the center of the community, which is the church in African American communities.”

The Rev. Dr. Melvin B. Tuggle III,
author of *It Is Well With My Soul—Churches and Institutions Collaborating for Public Health*
(Beautiful) Garden of Prayer Baptist Church, Baltimore, MD



Introduction

PURPOSE OF THIS GUIDE

Body & Soul is a wellness program developed for African American churches. The program empowers church members to eat a diet rich in fruits and vegetables every day for better health. Churches that embrace Body & Soul help their members take care of their bodies as well as their spirits. Body & Soul works by combining—

- Pastoral leadership
- Educational activities
- A church environment that supports healthy eating
- Peer counseling.

This guide explains how to run the program in your church. It tells how to create a Body & Soul program to fit your congregation. It also has tools and handouts to get started, and resources for more information.

WHY BODY & SOUL— THE POWER OF PREVENTION

African Americans are at high risk for many serious and often fatal diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, stroke, and cancer. African Americans are also more likely to suffer serious health problems and die from these diseases.

What can you do to lower your risk for disease? Eat a diet rich in fruits and vegetables every day. A healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables promotes good health and lowers the risk for these illnesses. Eating

plenty of fruits and vegetables may be one of the easiest things you can do to help improve your health.

THE BENEFITS OF BODY & SOUL TO YOUR CHURCH

Body & Soul churches embrace and celebrate good health through healthy eating. Your congregation will—

- Learn how health and spirituality are connected
- Feel empowered to take charge of their health
- Eat more fruits and vegetables every day
- Live healthier in other ways, such as eating less fat and getting more physical activity
- Gain access to vital health information at the church.

For 10 years, African American churches around the country have used this program. They have generously shared their ideas, tips, and success stories. Their experiences have helped other churches start strong programs. Once Body & Soul is thriving in your church, please share what you learned with other churches.

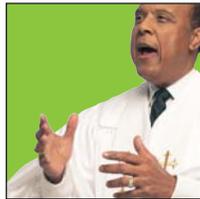
Body & Soul: The Four Pillars

A Body & Soul program is made up of four parts, which we call “pillars” because they are like the pillars of a church. Just as a church building needs support on all four sides, a successful Body & Soul program needs all four pillars to be active and strong.

“The African American community is in crisis. We are at the top of the charts for chronic disease.”

Body & Soul Church Coordinator, California

THE FOUR PILLARS OF BODY & SOUL ARE—



1. A pastor who is committed and involved

As the church’s spiritual and organizational leader, the pastor’s support of the program is vital. The more actively involved the pastor is, the better.



2. Church activities that promote healthy eating

Church gatherings and workshops teach both information and skills that encourage a healthy diet. A Body & Soul planning team plans and carries out the program’s activities.



3. A church environment that promotes healthy eating

It’s important to surround the congregation with healthy choices at meals and other church functions. This shows church members how simple it is to incorporate more fruits and vegetables into their daily diet.



4. Peer counseling that motivates church members to eat a healthy diet

One-on-one support helps church members take more control over their health.

BRINGING BODY & SOUL TO YOUR CHURCH

This section explains how to build your Body & Soul program around the four pillars. It offers tips for customizing Body & Soul to your congregation. Finally, it offers ideas on how to keep your Body & Soul program running well over time.

PILLAR 1: A Pastor Who Is Committed and Involved

Be sure to get the pastor's support up front. As the leader of the church, the pastor sends a clear message to the congregation. The pastor's support shows that the program is in keeping with the mission of the church. And it helps church members see the link between physical health and spiritual well-being. The pastor can—

- Launch the Body & Soul program at a kickoff event. Sign "The Church's Commitment to Good Health" pledge. Affirm the pledge before the congregation. (A sample pledge is included in Appendix B on page 34.)
- Be a role model for the congregation by eating more fruits and vegetables every day.
- Deliver inspirational messages about the link between good health and spirituality. Include Bible verses that refer to healthy eating and living in sermons, church bulletins, and newsletters.
- Ask that more fruits and vegetables be served at church functions to help create a healthy church setting.
- Start a "Body & Soul Sunday" where the church focuses on health once a month.
- Recognize the Body & Soul planning team.
- Praise the church members who have improved their eating habits.

The first step in starting Body & Soul is getting the pastor's blessing for the program. Plan how the pastor will be involved. Confirm activities early because pastors' schedules fill up quickly. The pastor should appoint the Program Coordinator. He or she may also make suggestions about who should be on the planning team. The more the pastor is involved, the better.



PILLAR 2: Church Activities That Promote Healthy Eating

Activities that encourage church members to eat more fruits and vegetables are the heart of Body & Soul. These can include workshops, cooking demonstrations, taste tests, and many others. Such activities help in three ways:

- Church members learn about health.
- They get the chance to try new types of fruits and vegetables.
- They gain the skills necessary to change their eating habits.

The more activities you offer, the more church members are exposed to fruits and vegetables and are motivated to eat more.

Body & Soul activities begin with a kickoff event followed by a range of learning activities. Remember to celebrate the church's success along the way, too.

The Body & Soul Kickoff Event

The launch event sets the tone for your whole program. This event—

- Introduces the program to the congregation
- Inspires members to take charge of their health
- Excites members about activities that will take place at the church.

Make sure that the event features many colorful and tasty fruits and vegetables. This will help get everyone excited about what's to come.

Include activities that appeal to different groups within the church, such as nutrition education activities in Sunday schools, men's meetings, or other group meetings.



Examples of kickoff events include a Body & Soul Sunday, a health fair, a prayer breakfast, a healthy lunch or dinner event, or a healthy picnic. At the kickoff, be sure to give out a calendar of future events. Members can commit to the program by signing the Eat 5 Cups A Day Pledge. (The pledge is in Appendix B on page 42.)

Ongoing Church Activities

Learning activities inform and inspire the congregation. Church members learn how and why to eat more fruits and vegetables as part of a healthy lifestyle. Include activities that appeal to different groups within the church, such as—

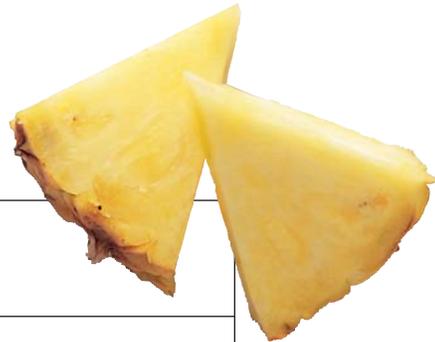
- Workshops on healthy eating; weight control; container gardening; preventing and controlling high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, and cancer; financial planning and budgeting
- Nutrition education activities in Sunday schools, men's meetings, or other group meetings

- Tours of the produce department in a local grocery store
- Demonstrations and classes on healthy ways to prepare and cook food
- Tasting parties with fruits and vegetables (e.g., smoothies, different types of fruits and vegetables)
- Messages about healthy eating and living in church bulletins and newsletters, and on the church's Web site.

Celebrating Success

A successful Body & Soul program means everyone has come together to improve their health. Celebrate! Examples of celebrations include—

- Recognition of the planning team during service
- Certificates for people who participated in the program
- Healthy luncheon or dinner
- A picnic or cookout.



GOOD NEWS: BODY & SOUL CHURCHES PROMOTE HEALTHY EATING HABITS

> One church's Men's Ministry held an "Iron Chef" style cook-off at the church picnic. Men were put on teams that were given various ingredients and were challenged to grill different dishes that used fruits and vegetables. The pastor and members of the planning team judged the dishes. All the members at the picnic enjoyed the results of the cook off.

> A Delaware church held workshops to help members budget their money and manage their credit. Members learned how to budget for groceries and shop for produce. This made it easier for them to afford buying more fruits and vegetables. The workshops were especially helpful to those on fixed incomes.

PILLAR 3: A Church Environment That Promotes Healthy Eating

Body & Soul is most effective when the church sets a good example. The congregation needs to hear the pastor speak about health. They also need to get information about healthy eating. Sermons, handouts, and even classes are not enough; church members also need to eat plenty of fruits and vegetables at church events.

Serving more fruits, vegetables, and other healthy foods at church events shows that the church “practices what it preaches.” The church is committed to the health of the congregation; and healthy eating becomes a part of church life.

IDEAS FOR A HEALTHY CHURCH ENVIRONMENT

Successful Body & Soul programs bring more fruits and vegetables into the church. Here are some examples:

- Serve more fruits and vegetables after church services and in church programs, especially those that involve children.
- Set up church policies that ensure more

fruits and vegetables are served at church functions. The policies should include vending machines and church stores as well.

- Make changes in the church kitchen. These can include training the kitchen committee, changing recipes and menus, and stocking the pantry with more fruits and vegetables.
- Encourage members to share the bounty of their gardens with the church family.
- Give bags of fruits and vegetables to sick and shut-in church members.
- Sponsor a farmers’ market at your church. (Contact your local USDA cooperative extension service listed in the resource section on page 44, to learn more.)
- Ask your local market or convenience store to sell more fruits and vegetables.
- Start a garden committee to support a church garden.



“We made a policy: No more danishes in Sunday school.”

Body & Soul Coordinator, Virginia

GOOD NEWS: BODY & SOUL CHURCHES CREATE HEALTHY CHURCH ENVIRONMENTS

> A Georgia church asked a dietitian to train the church kitchen committee to prepare healthier dishes. The committee members focused on using more fruits and vegetables and reducing the fat in traditional recipes. The committee improved meals they served to the congregation. They also made healthier meals for the soup kitchen, shut-ins, and special events.

> Several churches took a special interest in what the children were eating. Some made guidelines for their youth programs that encouraged serving fruits and vegetables instead of typical snacks.

> A California church found that the fruits and vegetables were more popular than chips.

> A Virginia church found that the children who attended the church's after-school program were not eating well at school. They were very hungry when they arrived at the after-school program. The church members looked for ways to improve the meals offered at school. They also started to serve healthy snacks, such as fruits and vegetables, in the church's after-school program.



Here is an example of a church Healthy Eating Policy.

[CHURCH NAME] HEALTHY EATING POLICY

Background

[Church Name] is committed to improving the health of its members as part of its [church's mission and/or health priorities].

African Americans are at increased risk of developing and dying from certain diet-related diseases, including heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and many types of cancer. African American youth have the highest rates of overweight and obesity among all children. Type 2 diabetes is also increasing at alarming rates among youth. The unhealthy eating habits that contribute to these serious problems begin in childhood and lead to the development of many diet-related diseases in adulthood.

Preventing these diseases is an important step in improving health in the African American community. Prevention saves lives, lessens the human burden of illness, lowers health care costs, and preserves our quality of life. Eating a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables may reduce the risk of these diseases. It is recommended that children age 2 to 8 eat at least 2 cups of fruits and vegetables a day; older children, teen girls, and women eat at least 3½ cups a day; and teen boys and men eat at least 4½ cups a day, depending on their levels of physical activity.

[Church Name] Healthy Eating Policy

In an effort to demonstrate our commitment to encourage our congregation to adopt healthy eating habits and active lifestyles, [Church Name] is establishing a Healthy Eating Policy. The goal of this Healthy Eating Policy is to increase the availability of fruits and vegetables in all meals and snacks served at meetings and functions at [Church Name]. The foods served at our activities should serve as a model of healthy eating to our children, our families, and our community.

This policy applies to all meals (breakfast, lunch, and dinner) and snacks served at church-sponsored meetings and functions. This policy also applies to all snacks and meals served to children in youth programs, including Sunday school, vacation bible classes, and after school activities. [Church Name]'s Healthy Eating Policy encourages—

- Serving two or more vegetable dishes at every meal
- Serving more fruit at meals
- Providing a choice of fruit for dessert
- Serving plenty of fresh fruits and vegetables as snacks
- Serving healthfully prepared meals that are low in saturated fat.

PILLAR
4:

Peer Counseling That Motivates Church Members to Eat a Healthy Diet

Peer counseling helps motivate church members to eat more fruits and vegetables. Interested church members sign up to talk with a trained volunteer, either can talk over the telephone or in person.

Church members talk with their peer counselors about how eating healthier relates to their life goals and personal values. Peer counselors tailor the talk to the person's readiness to change. Together, the church member and peer counselor come up with an action plan for eating more fruits and vegetables. This approach empowers people to take more control over their health.

Each church chooses and trains members to be peer counselors. The counselors learn skills for talking about health habits. A program to train peer counselors is available on an interactive DVD. Please see page 44 for information about how to order the DVD.

The peer counseling pillar of Body & Soul is based on the principles of motivational interviewing. This kind of interviewing is a proven method for changing health behavior. These skills can also be used in many outreach activities at the church.

Peer counseling helps "bring home" the Body & Soul program. It helps church members see how eating healthier can fit into their lives, and offers one-on-one attention and support to those who need it. This personal touch is the final pillar of an effective Body & Soul program.

Church members talk with their peer counselors about how eating healthier relates to their life goals and personal values.





Body & Soul
CELEBRATION

Healthy fruits,
vegetables and more.

Body & Soul
CELEBRATION
Healthy fruits,
vegetables and more.

Customizing Body & Soul for Your Church

Every church has different needs and interests. With this in mind, you can customize the Body & Soul program to fit your congregation. This section offers tips for forming a planning team and making plans that work for your church.

FORM THE BODY & SOUL PLANNING TEAM

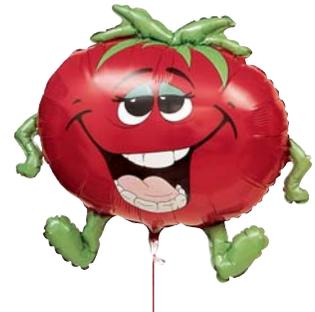
The pastor appoints a program coordinator to manage the program and oversee the planning team. The planning team is usually made up of 5 to 10 people, depending on the size of the church. The team customizes Body & Soul to meet the needs of the congregation; it is responsible for coordinating and promoting the program; and it tracks the program's success. The planning team can include—

- Members of the health ministry; men's, women's, and youth ministries; and the kitchen committee
- Doctors, nurses, dietitians, and others with expertise in health, food, and nutrition
- Church leaders, including Sunday school teachers and elders.

MAKE PLANS THAT WORK FOR YOUR CHURCH

A good way to begin planning Body & Soul is to work activities into the church's existing programs. You can add it to ministry programs, Sunday school, holiday events, Mother's and Father's Day celebrations, and more.

The planning team should also develop stand-alone Body & Soul activities. You can focus activities on one specific group, (e.g., men's ministry or the youth group) or design them to reach the entire congregation.



TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL PLANNING TEAM

- Schedule regular meetings early on. That way, everyone can put them on their calendars.
- Always prepare an agenda with specific goals for every meeting. This helps the team adhere to its timeline.
- Set up a system for regular communication with the team between meetings.
- Use the talents of team members by forming small working groups. For example, members who like to use their artistic talents can work on promotions or decorations. Meanwhile, other members can help with planning the workshops or getting donations.
- Encourage the planning team to think creatively.
- Be patient: Church-based programs take time, but they're worth it.



“Everybody can be great because everybody can serve... You only need a heart full of grace and a soul generated by love.”

Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Look for resources already in the church, such as volunteers and people with expertise in health. Then find ways to get other resources from the community. Other typical resources include educational materials, fruits and vegetables, and door prizes. These can often be found at little or no cost. (See Resources for a list of organizations to contact on page 43.) The team should—

- Prepare a timeline and task list that shows who will be responsible for what.
- Make a list of the resources needed for each activity.
- Ask community organizations to help with activities, materials, speakers, and food (e.g., 4-H, Extension Service, grocery stores).

- Get the word out early and often. Promote events in the church bulletin, newsletter, and displays (e.g., posters, bulletin board notices, banners).
- Offer door prizes for people who come to the activities.
- Be seen supporting Body & Soul. Appear at church services and functions.
- Maintain a tracking system to be sure each activity happens as planned.
- Keep a scrapbook (e.g., flyers, photos) so that the church has a record of its Body & Soul program.
- Schedule meetings between the planning team and the pastor for feedback on how well the program is working.

See Appendix A on page 29 for a sample meeting agenda and other planning materials that may be helpful to your Body & Soul planning team.



TIPS FOR WORKING WITH GROCERY STORES

Grocery stores make great Body & Soul partners. Like you, they want people to eat more fruits and vegetables, which is a good reason for them to work with you. They want to keep customers and will respond to customer needs. Here are some tips for working with local grocery stores:

- The grocery store may be willing to offer tours of the produce section, coupons, or donations of fruits and vegetables.
- Many grocery stores already have health programs and/or a community commitment. Check with the store manager about how Body & Soul can work with existing store activities.
- Most grocery stores have weekly flyers or ads. Ask if they can include a Body & Soul message.
- When working with store managers, point out benefits to the store:
 - Identifying with a community church
 - Linking to a popular message
 - Getting recognition from the church
 - Promoting the store to the congregation.

From *Promoting Health in Grocery Stores: Making Healthier Choices Easier Choices*, Minnesota Department of Health, Division of Health Promotion and Education.

Keeping the Spirit Alive—

HOW TO MAINTAIN YOUR BODY & SOUL PROGRAM

Body & Soul can be the start of an active health ministry, or it can become part of a ministry you already have. Either way, the program empowers church members to eat better and live better, thus enriching their lives. Build on this with more activities that promote healthy eating and living:

- Create a full health ministry. Bring in other health topics such as health screenings, preventing and managing chronic diseases, and substance abuse.
- Feature a Body & Soul article in the church newsletter.
- Set up a Body & Soul bulletin board in the church. Use it to post nutrition and health messages regularly.
- Include physical activity in church offerings. Walking groups and aerobics classes are two examples. One church has walking prayer meetings.
- Hold Body & Soul workshops every few months during the year.
- Create a Body & Soul ministry. Reach outside the church into the community or to other congregations.

- Invite nutrition or health support groups to meet regularly at the church. Include walking clubs and weight control programs.
- Expand Body & Soul into community services that the church provides, such as the Soup Kitchen or Meals On Wheels Association of America.



The program empowers church members to eat better and live better, thus enriching their lives.

THE BLESSINGS OF BODY & SOUL—

Success Stories

METROPOLITAN BAPTIST CHURCH, Pasadena, California

Founded in 1906, Metropolitan Baptist Church has 800 members. It is located in a suburb of Los Angeles, California. The church launched Body & Soul in the spring of 2001. Its mission was to “promote a nourishing way of eating that will enable us to be more efficient in services to Our Lord.”

To start, the pastor, Rev. Tyrone Skinner, named the Body & Soul program coordinator. He chose one of the deaconesses, a former registered nurse. The two then put together the planning team. The team was made up of members of the trustee board, the Men’s and Women’s Auxiliary, the Hospitality Committee, the Seniors’ Group, and other church members who were interested in good nutrition and fitness. The coordinator presented Body & Soul at auxiliary group meetings and encouraged their support. Together, the team put the four program pillars into action.

Pastor Involvement

Rev. Skinner was an active leader in bringing Body & Soul to the church members. He took part in the kickoff event, which was a healthy church picnic. He also served as a judge at a men’s cook-off. He encouraged members to bring lots of fruits and vegetables and other healthy foods to the event. He made a special request that the church anniversary celebration feature foods prepared with less fat and more fruits and vegetables.

Church Activities

The planning team represented a broad range of groups within the church; so they had a good sense of the topics members wanted to learn about. The team also used the church calendar to find ways to work Body & Soul into activities that had already been planned. Metropolitan’s Body & Soul activities included—

- A kickoff event during the church’s anniversary celebration
- Learning activities, such as healthy cooking classes and workshops on choosing, storing, and preparing fruits and vegetables
- Fruit and vegetable tastings
- High blood pressure screenings after church or before choir practice
- A weekly health support group to discuss various health topics and go for walks around the church
- Distributing literature about healthy eating and disease prevention, and posting a Body & Soul display board in the church for activity fliers and other information
- Promoting Body & Soul activities through church bulletins, pulpit announcements, and word of mouth.

Creating a Healthy Church Environment

Metropolitan made healthy changes that could be seen throughout the congregation—and even beyond. The planning team arranged for a Body & Soul meal before the church’s revival. Through that experience, other area churches had a taste of what Body & Soul offered.

Peer Counseling

Metropolitan’s Body & Soul planning team chose church members to be peer counselors. During the kickoff event, members of the congregation signed up to get peer counseling. The church members met with their peer counselors one-on-one. The counselors talked about how healthy eating fit in with church member’s values. They showed how it could help them meet their overall personal goals. Church members benefited from the experience. They said it was important to have someone from the church to talk to. This really helped them make healthy changes.

Metropolitan made healthy changes that could be seen throughout the congregation—and even beyond.

Keeping the Spirit Alive

Body & Soul now thrives at Metropolitan. It has also sparked interest among other churches in the area. The Body & Soul planning team applied to become a formal ministry within the church. The team has since expanded the program to include physical activity. The Body & Soul ministry has also reached out to other churches, bringing the program to regional meetings. Ministry members now teach other churches about Body & Soul and help them start their own programs.

Body & Soul's real success lies with the committed, hardworking members of African American churches across the country. Their energy and vision have brought about much-needed changes. As a result, Body & Soul is improving the health of church members every day.

Below are just a few of the things churches have accomplished using Body & Soul. Each success story shows how the church used Body & Soul's four pillars to meet and even surpass their original goals.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH, Hampton, Virginia

Established in 1865, First Baptist Church has a membership of 1,400 people. It is located in Hampton, Virginia. The church began its Body & Soul program in January 2001.

The Body & Soul program coordinator for First Baptist was a dietitian. She stressed the importance of creating a well-rounded team that included members of the food service and health committees. Thus, the planning team was made up of members of the Health Ministry, the Women's and Food Auxiliaries, the church school, and members with an interest in nutrition and health. The planning team made a list of nutrition and health topics for its Body & Soul program. Then it surveyed the members of the congregation to make sure the program matched their interests.

Pastor Involvement

The First Baptist pastor laid the foundation for the program by delivering a stirring sermon. He addressed the link between health and spirituality. And he encouraged all church members to participate in Body & Soul. He also gave the invocation at the kickoff event.

The members have come to expect healthy options whenever food is served.

Church Activities

Church members tasted new fruits and vegetables and learned how to prepare them more healthfully. Activities included—

- A kickoff event that introduced the benefits of fruits and vegetables and the importance of preventing diseases.
- Cooking demonstrations that showed healthy ways to make traditional recipes with more fruits and vegetables.
- A gadget party to show people different tools that make it easier to prepare fruits and vegetables.
- A course on patio gardening, taught by an agent from the local extension service.
- A session on how to choose fresh fruits and vegetables, with a speaker from a grocery store produce department.
- A fruit and vegetable challenge held throughout the program. Church members received calendars and checked off each day they reached their fruit and vegetable goals. They handed in their calendars at each Body & Soul activity, where door prizes such as cookbooks and aprons were given away.

Creating a Healthy Church Environment

First Baptist created a "healthy meals and snacks" policy. The policy requires including fruits and vegetables whenever food is served in the church or the nursery.

Peer Counseling

Church members volunteered to serve as Body & Soul peer counselors. The volunteers included social workers, teachers, nurses, and dietitians. The peer counselors helped their fellow church members break through the barriers that kept them from eating more fruits and vegetables. The counselors gained a lot, too; they felt a strong sense of accomplishment in helping their fellow church members.

Keeping the Spirit Alive

The steps taken by First Baptist have grown into standing changes in the church. Today, the Food Auxiliary automatically prepares more fruit and vegetable dishes for church events. The members have come to expect healthy options whenever food is served. Members have also become interested in other health topics, and the church holds health-related activities on a regular basis. The program coordinator at First Baptist is now helping other area churches start Body & Soul.



THE GOOD NEWS ABOUT FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Eating a variety of colorful fruits and vegetables every day as part of a healthy diet may reduce the risk of chronic diseases such as high blood pressure, heart disease, certain cancers, and type 2 diabetes. African Americans have very high rates of these diseases and get them earlier in life. They also suffer more serious health problems and die at an earlier age from these diseases. Most African Americans eat less than half of the daily amount of fruits and vegetables recommended for good health.

Everyone has the power to make choices to improve their health. The good news is that eating more fruits and vegetables is one of the easiest things you can do to get started.

This section has information about—

- Why eating fruits and vegetables is important for good health
- How many cups of fruits and vegetables you need each day
- Easy ways to eat more fruits and vegetables.



Why Is Eating Fruits and Vegetables Important for Children?

IT ALL BEGINS IN CHILDHOOD

African American youth have the highest rates of overweight and obesity among all children. Type 2 diabetes is also going up at alarming rates among African American children. Eating habits that affect a child's risk for these problems begin in childhood. Healthy eating in childhood, and into the adult years, can help lower their chances for diseases later in life. These diseases include obesity, overweight, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and cancer. Most African American children eat less than half of the amount of fruits and vegetables recommended for good health.

GOOD HABITS LAST A LIFETIME

It's important for us to help kids develop good habits they can carry into their adult lives. Eating more fruits and vegetables when they are young will make it easier for them to eat more fruits and vegetables as adults.

NUTRIENTS TO GROW HEALTHY AND STRONG

Fruits and vegetables give children many of the nutrients they need to grow healthfully. Eating enough fruits and vegetables also helps children develop strong muscles, bones, and teeth.



Why is Eating Fruits and Vegetables Important for Adults?



People who eat 2½ to 4½ cups of fruits and vegetables a day have a lower chance of getting many cancers.

HELP MANAGE YOUR WEIGHT

When combined with an active lifestyle, eating a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables may help you manage your weight. Most are low in calories and fat, and many contain lots of water and fiber to help you feel full.

You can eat fewer calories and still eat a satisfying amount of food when you eat more fruits and vegetables at meals and less foods high in fat and added sugars. Eat fruits and vegetables raw or steamed and use very small amounts of added sauces, butters, or oils.

LOWER YOUR CHANCES OF GETTING SOME CANCERS

People who eat a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables have a lower chance of getting cancers of the oral cavity and pharynx, larynx, lung, esophagus, stomach, and colon-rectum.

LOWER YOUR CHANCES OF HEART DISEASE & STROKE

Heart-healthy diets emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products. They include lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts. They are also low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars. People who consume such diets are likely to lower their blood pressure and cholesterol and have a reduced risk of stroke and other cardiovascular diseases.

REDUCE HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE

In the Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension (DASH) study, people with high blood pressure followed a special eating plan. These people saw their blood pressure go down after only 1 month. The plan included 4 to 5 cups of fruits and vegetables a day and 2 to 3 servings of low-fat dairy foods.

The DASH eating plan is low in saturated fat and cholesterol. The plan allows only very small amounts of red meat, sweets, and sugar-containing drinks. It also includes moderate amounts of whole grains, fish, poultry, and nuts.

People in the DASH study with the lowest sodium intake had the biggest fall in blood pressure. Too much sodium causes blood pressure to rise. Potassium counteracts the effect of sodium on blood pressure. Yet, African Americans get only half their potassium needs. Fruits and vegetables are naturally high in potassium and low in sodium.

LOWER YOUR CHANCES OF DIABETES

Obesity and diet are strong risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes; so it is important to be at a healthy weight. Get enough exercise and eat a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables every day.

What's in Fruits and Vegetables?

Fruits and vegetables are a great source of many vitamins, minerals, and fiber that the body needs. They are also packed with hundreds of natural substances called phytochemicals that may help protect against many diseases. Most fruits and vegetables are low in fat and calories.

VITAMINS

Fruits and vegetables provide many important vitamins, such as vitamin A and vitamin C, which the body needs vitamins to do many things. For example, some vitamins help the body produce energy; others help keep skin healthy. Many adults do not get enough vitamins A and C through the foods they eat. The best way to get vitamins is to eat the whole foods that contain them, such as fruits and vegetables.

MINERALS

Fruits and vegetables provide many important minerals, such as potassium and magnesium, which many adults do not get enough of. The body needs potassium to help maintain healthy blood, pressure, and magnesium to help maintain healthy bones.

FIBER

Most fruits and vegetables are a good source of fiber. One type of fiber can help lower cholesterol and slows down digestion so the body can absorb more nutrients and better control blood sugar levels. Another type of fiber helps people get rid of waste and keeps them regular.

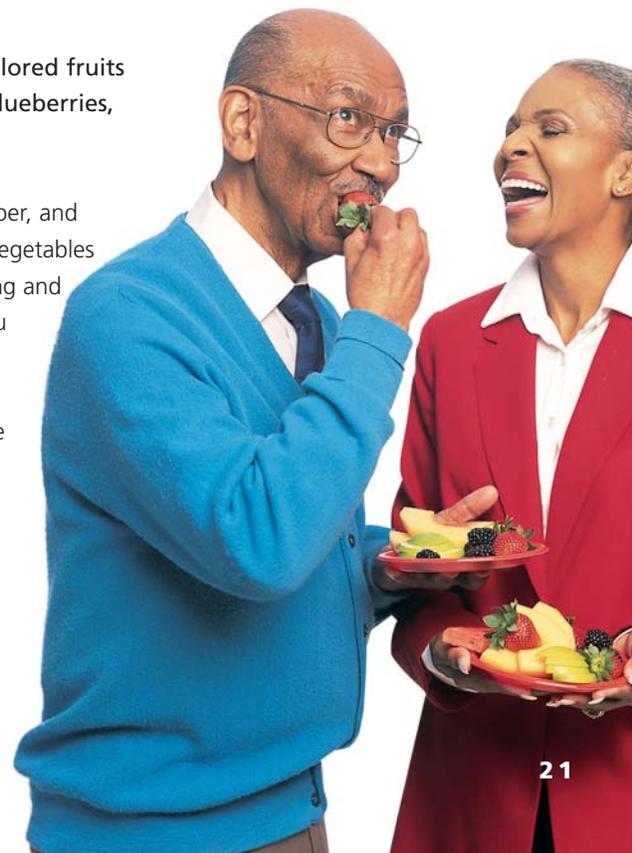
PHYTOCHEMICALS

Phytochemicals (fight-o-chemicals) are naturally occurring substances in fruits and vegetables that may help fight to protect your health. Fruits and vegetables have hundreds of phytochemicals. Phytochemicals work together with vitamins and minerals to promote good health.

Here are just a few examples of the phytochemicals found in fruits and vegetables:

- **Carotenoids** in red and yellow-orange fruits and vegetables (such as tomatoes, sweet potatoes, carrots)
- **Lycopene** in tomato-based foods (such as tomato sauce, tomato paste)
- **Lutein and zeaxanthin** in leafy greens (such as collard greens, spinach, romaine lettuce)
- **Flavanoids** in brightly colored fruits and vegetables (such as blueberries, cherries, strawberries).

The vitamins, minerals, fiber, and phytochemicals in fruits and vegetables combine for a health-protecting and disease-fighting effect that you can't get from vitamin pills. Only a variety of fruits and vegetables give you all of these nutrients together.

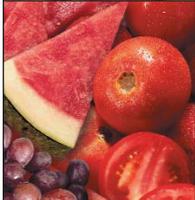
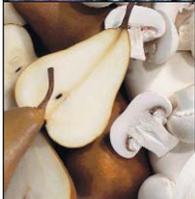


The Colors of Health

Fruits and vegetables come in a rainbow of colors. Each color is a sign of different important nutrients. You can benefit from eating fruits and vegetables of different colors regularly. These include red, dark green, yellow, blue, purple, white, and orange. Health authorities advise making a special effort to eat more dark green vegetables, dark orange vegetables, and beans in particular to get the nutrients most of us need more of.

This chart shows five basic color groups and gives some examples of fruits and vegetables from each.



	Green Leafy greens (collard, mustard, and turnip greens, swiss chard, kale, spinach and lettuces), asparagus, green peppers, broccoli, green beans, peas, green cabbage, green onion, brussels sprouts, okra, zucchini, chinese cabbage (napa/bok choy), green apples, green grapes, honeydew melon, kiwifruit, limes
	Yellow-orange Carrots, summer squash, corn, sweet potatoes, butternut squash, pumpkin, yellow peppers, rutabagas, cantaloupe, grapefruit, lemons, nectarines, oranges, peaches, pineapples, tangerines, apricots, mangoes, papayas
	Red Tomatoes, spaghetti sauce, tomato juice, tomato soup, red peppers, red onions, beets, red cabbage, kidney beans, apples, pink grapefruit, red grapes, strawberries, cherries, watermelon, raspberries, cranberries, pomegranates
	Blue-purple Eggplant, purple grapes, plums, raisins, blueberries, blackberries, purple figs, dried plums, black currants
	White Cauliflower, mushrooms, white beans, onions, garlic, parsnips, shallots, turnips, ginger, jicama, bananas, pears



How Many Fruits and Vegetables Do You Need?

Everybody should eat a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables. But most adults need to eat more than children. And men need even more than women. Over 75% of all African Americans aren't eating enough fruits and vegetables to keep them healthy.

Women			
	AGE	FRUITS	VEGETABLES
Less Active	19–30	2 cups	2 ½ cups
	31–50	1 ½ cups	2 ½ cups
	51+	1 ½ cups	2 cups
Fairly Active	19–50	2 cups	2 ½ cups
	51+	1 ½ cups	2 ½ cups
Active	19–50	2 cups	3 cups
	51+	2 cups	2 ½ cups



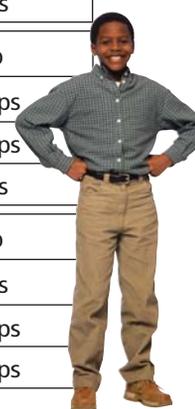
Men			
	AGE	FRUITS	VEGETABLES
Less Active	19–50	2 cups	3 cups
	51+	2 cups	2 ½ cups
Fairly Active	19–30	2 cups	3 ½ cups
	31+	2 cups	3 cups
Active	19–30	2 ½ cups	4 cups
	31–50	2 ½ cups	3 ½ cups
	51+	2 cups	3 cups



Girls			
	AGE	FRUITS	VEGETABLES
Less Active	2–3	1 cup	1 cup
	4–8	1 cup	1 ½ cups
	9–13	1 ½ cups	2 cups
	14–18	1 ½ cups	2 ½ cups
Fairly Active	2–3	1 cup	1 cup
	4–8	1 ½ cups	1 ½ cups
	9–13	1 ½ cups	2 cups
	14–18	2 cups	2 ½ cups
Active	2–3	1 cup	1 cup
	4–8	1 ½ cups	1 ½ cups
	9–13	1 ½ cups	2 ½ cups
	14–18	2 cups	3 cups



Boys			
	AGE	FRUITS	VEGETABLES
Less Active	2–3	1 cup	1 cup
	4–8	1 ½ cups	1 ½ cups
	9–13	1 ½ cups	2 ½ cups
	14–18	2 cups	3 cups
Fairly Active	2–3	1 cup	1 cup
	4–8	1 ½ cups	1 ½ cups
	9–13	1 ½ cups	2 ½ cups
	14–18	2 cups	3 cups
Active	2–3	1 cup	1 cup
	4–8	1 ½ cups	2 cups
	9–13	2 cups	2 ½ cups
	14–18	2 ½ cups	3 ½ cups



MOST AFRICAN AMERICANS NEED TO EAT MORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES EVERY DAY.

- African American children need to eat at least 2 more cups of fruits and vegetables a day to meet their needs.
- African American women need to eat 2 ½ more cups of fruits and vegetables a day to meet their needs.
- African American teenage boys and men need to eat 3 more cups of fruits and vegetables a day to meet their needs.

What Are Some Easy Ways to Eat More Fruits and Vegetables?

Eating your fruits and vegetables is a lot easier than you might think. One-cup equivalent of most fruits and vegetables is the amount that would fit in a measuring cup if chopped, or about 2 handfuls. The exceptions are raw leafy greens (2 cups count as 1 cup) or dried fruit (½ cup counts as 1 cup).

The following examples count as 1 cup:

- 1 small apple
- 1 large banana
- 2 medium cantaloupe wedges
- 1 medium grapefruit
- 1 large orange
- 1 large peach
- 1 medium pear
- 2 large or 3 small plums
- 8 large strawberries
- 1 small watermelon wedge
- 2 small boxes of raisins or other dried fruit
- 3 spears of broccoli
- 1 cup of cooked greens or 2 cups raw
(spinach, collards, mustard greens, turnip greens)
- 2 medium carrots or 12 baby carrots
- 1 large sweet potato
- 1 large ear of corn
- 1 medium potato
- 2 large stalks of celery
- 1 large bell pepper
- 1 large tomato
- ½ can of beans

For example, a 35-year-old fairly active woman would need 4½ cups per day. The chart below shows what 4½ cups might look like.

MORNING	 <p>1 large banana 1 cup</p>	
MID-DAY	 <p>1 cup 2 cups of lettuce count as 1 cup of vegetables</p>	 <p>1 cup 1 small apple</p>
EVENING	 <p>1 ½ cups ½ cup broccoli</p>	 <p>1 cup 1 cup sweet potato</p>

Fruits and vegetables are only one component of a healthy diet. A healthy diet also includes whole grains, fat-free or low-fat milk products, lean meats, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts. It is also low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt, and added sugars.

The History of Body & Soul

Body & Soul is based on 10 years of successful programs in African American churches across the country. Two programs were combined to create Body & Soul: “Black Churches United for Better Health” and “Eat for Life.” These programs were conducted in churches of various sizes and denominations in urban, suburban, and rural areas. Regardless of the church’s location or size, each of these faith-based programs was highly successful in helping church members eat more fruits and vegetables.

- “Black Churches United for Better Health” was a collaborative effort among 50 African American churches; the North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Community Health; the Duke Comprehensive Cancer Center; the North Carolina State University Cooperative Extension Service; the University of North Carolina; and local health departments and Cooperative Extension agents. It was a 4-year project funded by a grant from the National Cancer Institute to the University of North Carolina Department of Nutrition.
- “Eat for Life” was a collaboration among African American churches in Atlanta, Georgia and Emory University. It was funded by a grant from the National Cancer Institute.
- “Body & Soul” was developed as a pilot

program in collaboration with the American Cancer Society, the University of North Carolina, University of Michigan, and the National Cancer Institute. The program combined the most successful components of “Black Churches United for Better Health” and “Eat for Life.” African American churches in California, Delaware, Georgia, North Carolina, and Virginia successfully started and ran the program.

Churches that participated in the pilot program

Bethel AME, Wilmington, DE
Cedar Grove Missionary Baptist Church, Greenville, SC
Church of Christ of Alondra, Alondra, CA
First Baptist Church—Garmon Street, Warner Robbins, GA
Good Shepherd Baptist Church, Richmond, VA
Lewis Chapel Missionary Baptist Church, Fayetteville, NC
Metropolitan Baptist Church, Pasadena, CA
New Destiny Fellowship, Wilmington, DE
New Light Baptist Church, Glen Allen, VA
Shiloh Baptist Church, Brunswick, GA
Shiloh Baptist Church, Wilmington, DE
Simpson United Methodist, Newark, DE
St. Mark’s United Methodist, Taylors, SC
St. Mary’s of the Immaculate Conception, New Castle, DE
Whatcoat United Methodist, Dover, DE

Regardless of the church’s location or size, each of these faith-based programs was highly successful in helping church members eat more fruits and vegetables.



“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the
glory of God”

1 Corinthians 10:31



Appendix A: Planning Materials

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHURCH COORDINATOR AND PLANNING TEAM

AGENDA FOR FIRST PLANNING TEAM MEETING

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY TASK LIST AND TIMELINE

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY PLANNING FORM

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY FEEDBACK FORM—WHAT DID YOU THINK?

ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF THE CHURCH COORDINATOR AND PLANNING TEAM

CHURCH COORDINATOR ROLE

The coordinator oversees and manages all aspects of the program. In some cases, two co-coordinators can manage the program to ease the workload.

Coordinator Responsibilities

- Give program information to the planning team.
- Oversee planning of Body & Soul with the planning team.
- Keep in regular contact with the team all through the program.
Ensure that tasks are being completed in a timely and successful way.
- Provide feedback to the clergy.
- Ensure that celebration of Body & Soul occurs and that those who contributed to the program are recognized.

PLANNING TEAM ROLE

The planning team is responsible for planning and carrying out the program. The planning team is also responsible for linking the program to the congregation and pastor.

Planning team Responsibilities

- Hold regular meetings.
- Plan specific program activities.
- Identify and recruit volunteers.
- Oversee/manage program.
- Provide feedback to the pastor and other church leaders.
- Ensure that tracking and feedback forms are done.
- Participate in celebrating the success of Body & Soul.

AGENDA FOR FIRST PLANNING TEAM MEETING

PRAYER

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTIONS

OVERVIEW OF PROGRAM

- Goals and benefits of Body & Soul
- Review the four pillars of Body & Soul:
 1. Pastoral leadership
 2. Educational activities
 3. A church environment that supports healthy eating
 4. Peer counseling.

GROUP DISCUSSION

- Benefits of eating more fruits and vegetables (presentation by health professional)
- How healthy eating fits into the church's mission
- How Body & Soul can fit into the church's culture and mission.

TEAM ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

IDENTIFY RESOURCES

NEXT STEPS

- Outline tasks and time schedule.
- Recruit volunteers.
- Introduce Body & Soul to the congregation.

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY PLANNING FORM		
Activity:		
Date:		
Time:	Location:	Expected Attendance:
Contact Person Name:		
Contact Person Phone:		
Purpose of Activity:		
Individuals Involved: (e.g., speakers, volunteers)		
Name:	Phone:	Role:
Promotion/Invitation Plans:		
Equipment and Supplies Needed:		
Refreshment List:		
Other:		

EDUCATIONAL ACTIVITY PLANNING FORM—WHAT DID YOU THINK?

Name of Event, Class, or Workshop:

1. How would you rate this activity? Circle one.

Excellent

Good

Fair

Poor

2. What did you like most?

3. What would you change?

4. What other types of activities would you like to see at the church?

Other comments:

Appendix B: Educational Materials for the Congregation

THE CHURCH'S COMMITMENT TO GOOD HEALTH PLEDGE

BODY & SOUL: A CELEBRATION OF HEALTHY EATING AND LIVING FACT SHEET

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES TO NOURISH YOUR BODY FACT SHEET

THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

EAT FOR COLOR

EASY WAYS TO ENJOY FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

TIPS TO REACH YOUR FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GOAL—START TODAY!

DOWN-HOME HEALTHY—ENJOY YOUR FAVORITE FAMILY RECIPES!

EAT A COLORFUL VARIETY OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES EVERY DAY PLEDGE

THE CHURCH'S COMMITMENT TO GOOD HEALTH PLEDGE

JUST AS THE CHURCH NOURISHES OUR SPIRIT—WE MUST ALSO NOURISH OUR BODIES.

“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”

(1 Corinthians 10:31)

“Do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have received from God?”

(1 Corinthians 6:19).

All members of _____ (name of church) have a responsibility to care for their bodies as temples of God. Healthy minds and spirits need healthy bodies, healthy diets, regular physical activity, and preventive medical care.

Therefore, _____ (name of church) will participate in the Body & Soul program. Our goal is to inspire church leaders and congregation members to adopt nutritious food practices—especially, eating a diet rich in fruits and vegetables each day.

Our Body & Soul program will consist of—

- A kickoff event on _____ (date)
- Activities that teach about healthy eating and good health at least twice a month for the duration of the program
- Opportunities to try fruits and vegetables at the church
- Fruits and vegetables served at church functions.

The church commits to establishing and maintaining a planning team to plan and manage these activities. The team will be coordinated by _____
_____. (name of coordinator)

The church's mission is soul salvation (Matthew 28:19–20, Romans 10:9–10). We must also focus on our bodies.

.....
Signature of Pastor

BODY & SOUL: A CELEBRATION OF HEALTHY EATING AND LIVING FACT SHEET

WHAT IS BODY & SOUL?

Body & Soul is a health program developed for African American churches. That every day. The program goals are to promote good health and to reduce the risk for serious illnesses in the congregation. Just as the church nourishes our spirit, we also must nourish our body.

WHY BODY & SOUL?

African Americans are more likely than other groups to suffer from diseases related to poor eating habits. These diseases include high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, and many types of cancer. Eating a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables may help lower your risk of getting these serious and often fatal diseases.

HOW DOES BODY & SOUL WORK?

Body & Soul links a healthy lifestyle to deeper spiritual values. Inspirational talks and testimonials from clergy and church leaders carry the Body & Soul message. Church gatherings, activities, and workshops teach church members how to lead healthier, more active lives. More fruits and vegetables served at meals and other church functions help church members see how easy it is to include more fruits and vegetables in their meals at home.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BODY & SOUL?

Body & Soul congregations embrace and celebrate good health through good nutrition. You will—

- Learn about the connection between health and spirituality.
- Gain confidence that you can take charge of your health.
- Create a church environment that promotes good health.
- Increase the amount of fruits and vegetables you eat every day.
- Improve health habits, such as eating less fat and becoming more physically active.

FRUITS AND VEGETABLES TO NOURISH YOUR BODY FACT SHEET

Eating a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables every day promotes good health and may help lower your blood pressure. African Americans suffer serious health problems and die from these diseases. Eating a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables every day may be one of the easiest things you can do to promote a healthy body and soul.



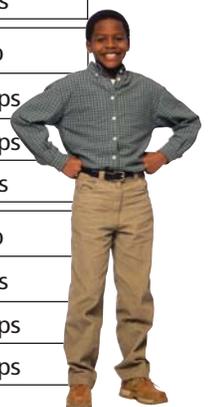
Women			
	AGE	FRUITS	VEGETABLES
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	31–50	1 ½ cups	2 ½ cups
	51+	1 ½ cups	2 cups
Fairly Active	19–50	2 cups	2 ½ cups
	51+	1 ½ cups	2 ½ cups
	Active	19–50	2 cups
	51+	2 cups	2 ½ cups



Men			
	AGE	FRUITS	VEGETABLES
Less Active	19–50	2 cups	3 cups
	51+	2 cups	2 ½ cups
Fairly Active	19–30	2 cups	3 ½ cups
	31+	2 cups	3 cups
Active	19–30	2 ½ cups	4 cups
	31–50	2 ½ cups	3 ½ cups
	51+	2 cups	3 cups



Girls			
	AGE	FRUITS	VEGETABLES
Less Active	2–3	1 cup	1 cup
	4–8	1 cup	1 ½ cups
	9–13	1 ½ cups	2 cups
	14–18	1 ½ cups	2 ½ cups
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Boys			
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	14–18	2 cups	3 cups
Active	2–3	1 cup	1 cup
	4–8	1 ½ cups	2 cups
	9–13	2 cups	2 ½ cups
	14–18	2 ½ cups	3 ½ cups

IT'S EASY TO EAT YOUR FRUITS AND VEGETABLES.

A one-cup equivalent of most fruits and vegetables is the amount that would fit in a measuring cup if chopped, or about 2 handfuls. The exceptions are raw leafy greens (2 cups count as 1 cup) or dried fruit (½ cup counts as 1 cup).

THE HEALTH BENEFITS OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

Fruits and vegetables are a great source of vitamins, minerals, and fiber that your body needs to stay healthy. Most fruits and vegetables are also low in fat and calories.

No vitamin pill or supplement can give you all that fruits and vegetables have to offer.

WHY FRUITS AND VEGETABLES ARE GOOD FOR CHILDREN

It All Begins in Childhood

African American youth have the highest rates of overweight and obesity among all children. The rate of type 2 diabetes is also going up at alarming rates among African American children. Eating habits that affect a child's risk for these problems begin in childhood. Healthy eating in childhood, and into the adult years, will lower their chances for diseases later in life. These diseases include obesity, overweight, diabetes, heart disease, high blood pressure, and cancer. Most African American children eat less than half of the amount of fruits and vegetables recommended for good health.

Good Habits Last a Lifetime

It's important for us to help children develop good habits they can carry into their adult lives. Eating more fruits and vegetables when they are young will make it easier for them to choose more fruits and vegetables as adults.

Nutrients to Grow Healthy and Strong

Fruits and vegetables give children many of the nutrients they need to grow healthfully. Eating enough fruits and vegetables also helps children develop strong muscles, bones, and teeth.

THE FOLLOWING EXAMPLES COUNT AS 1 CUP

1 small apple	3 spears of broccoli
1 large banana	1 cup of cooked greens or 2 cups raw (spinach, collards, mustard greens, turnip greens)
2 medium cantaloupe wedges	2 medium carrots or 12 baby carrots
1 medium grapefruit	1 large sweet potato
1 large orange	1 large ear of corn
1 large peach	1 medium potato
1 medium pear	2 large stalks of celery
2 large or 3 small plums	1 large bell pepper
8 large strawberries	1 large tomato
1 small watermelon wedge	½ can of beans
2 small boxes of raisins or other dried fruit	

WHY FRUITS AND VEGETABLES ARE GOOD FOR ADULTS

Help Manage Your Weight

When combined with a healthy, active lifestyle, a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables may help you manage your weight. Most fruits and vegetables are low in calories and fat; many contain water and fiber to help you feel full. You can consume fewer calories and still eat satisfying meals consisting of more fruits and vegetables and less food higher in fat and added sugar. For the best calorie control, eat fruits and vegetables raw or steamed, or prepare them with very small amounts of added sauces, butters, or oils.

Lower Your Chances of Getting Some Cancers

People who eat a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables have a lower chance of getting cancers of oral cavity and pharynx, larynx, lung, esophagus, stomach, and colon-rectum.

Lower Your Chances of Heart Disease

Heart-healthy diets emphasize fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and fat-free or low-fat milk and milk products. They include lean meats, poultry, fish, beans, eggs, and nuts. They are also low in saturated fats, trans fats, cholesterol, salt (sodium), and added sugars. People who consume such diets are likely to lower their blood pressure and cholesterol and have a reduced risk of stroke and other cardiovascular diseases.

Reduce High Blood Pressure

In the DASH study, people with high blood pressure followed a special eating plan. The people in this study saw their blood pressure go down after only 1 month. The plan included 4 to 5 cups of fruits and vegetables a day and 2 to 3 servings of low-fat dairy foods. The DASH eating plan is low in saturated fat and cholesterol. The plan allows only very small amounts of red meat, sweets, and beverages that contain sugar. It also includes moderate amounts of whole grains, fish, poultry, and nuts. People in the DASH study who had the lowest sodium intake had the biggest fall in blood pressure. Too much sodium causes blood pressure to rise. Potassium helps balance the effect of too much sodium on blood pressure. Fruits and vegetables are a great source of potassium.

Lower Your Chances for Diabetes

Obesity and poor diet are strong risk factors for developing type 2 diabetes. So it is important to be at a healthy weight. Get enough exercise and eat a healthy diet rich in fruits and vegetables every day.

EAT FOR COLOR

It's important to eat fruits and vegetables of different colors. Each color is a sign of different important nutrients that work together to help protect your health. Try fruits and vegetables from each of the following color groups:

GREEN

Leafy greens, lettuce, green peppers, broccoli, green beans, peas, green cabbage, green apples, green grapes, honeydew, kiwifruit

ORANGE/YELLOW

Carrots, sweet potatoes, butternut and winter squash, cantaloupe, oranges, lemons, nectarines, peaches, mangoes, papayas

RED

Tomatoes, spaghetti sauce, tomato juice, red peppers, red onions, kidney beans, red lentils, apples, pink grapefruit, red grapes, strawberries, cherries, watermelon, raspberries, cranberries

BLUE/PURPLE

Eggplant, purple grapes, plums, raisins, blueberries, blackberries, purple figs, dried plums, black currants

WHITE

Cauliflower, mushrooms, onions, garlic, parsnips, shallots, turnips, ginger, jicama, bananas, pears

EASY WAYS TO ENJOY FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Make fruits and vegetables the focus of each meal instead of just side dishes—aim for half your plate.
- Start your day with a piece of fruit or a handful of grapes or berries.
- Snack on fruits throughout the day, such as apples, plums, or tangerines.
- Eat raw vegetables with low-fat dip as snacks.
- Eat a big salad at lunch.
- Enjoy your favorite beans and peas as a side dish or on top of your salad.
- Add fresh or frozen vegetables to your favorite pasta sauce, casserole, or main dish.
- Try fruits such as berries or mangoes for dessert.

TIPS TO REACH YOUR FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GOAL—START TODAY!

You can eat more fruits and vegetables by making a few simple changes. Try the following tips for getting your fruits and vegetables every day:

- Eat an apple, orange, or other piece of fruit as a snack.
- Add strawberries, blueberries, pineapple, and other fresh or frozen fruit to your breakfast.
- Top yogurt with fresh sliced fruit.
- Eat a big salad at lunch.
- Snack on raw veggies with low-fat dip.
- Enjoy soups, such as vegetable, tomato, and split pea.
- Add more beans and vegetables to your chili.
- Add sliced tomatoes, onion, bell peppers, different kinds of lettuce, sprouts, and sliced cucumbers to your favorite sandwich or wrap.
- Add two sides of vegetables to your dinner. For convenience, try frozen vegetables or some low-fat baked beans.
- Order pizza with peppers, mushrooms, spinach, or onions. Don't forget to add fresh tomatoes!
- Add frozen or fresh vegetables to a casserole or omelet.
- Add vegetables, such as zucchini, carrots, onion, or broccoli, to pasta sauces.

WHEN EATING OUT

- Order a salad at fast food and other restaurants.
- Order main dishes that come with a side of vegetables. Or ask for a side of vegetables instead of the fries or rice.
- Try a vegetable-based main dish, such as vegetable stir-fry.
- For dessert, order fruit—fresh, poached, or baked.

AT THE GROCERY STORE

The first step to eating more fruits and vegetables each day is to have them around to eat. The following shopping tips can help you keep plenty of fruits and vegetables at home:

- Pick fresh fruits and vegetables that are in season or grown locally. They taste better and stay fresh longer.
- Stock up on fresh fruits and vegetables that last a week or more in the refrigerator (e.g., apples, melons, grapes, nectarines, oranges, pears, blueberries, cherries, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, beets, cabbage, cauliflower, onions, rutabaga, and turnips).
- Consider frozen vegetables and fruits. They are already cut up, they last in the freezer for several months, and they are just as good for you as the fresh ones.
- Stock up on canned beans for easy side dishes. Try pinto beans, black beans, black-eyed peas, kidney beans, chick peas, and low-fat baked beans.

AT SOCIAL GATHERINGS

- Serve a raw vegetable tray with low-fat dip.
- Serve sliced fresh fruit with low-fat yogurt dip.
- Set out a fruit bowl filled with fresh apples, pears, oranges, or bananas. This works great for community functions or Sunday school classes.
- For potlucks, bring a vegetable side dish, such as green bean casserole or sautéed greens.

DOWN-HOME HEALTHY—ENJOY YOUR FAVORITE FAMILY RECIPES!

Healthy soul food tastes great. In fact, the basic staples of traditional soul food include lots of healthy vegetables: dark leafy greens, sweet potatoes, and high-fiber black-eyed peas. But they are often cooked with ham hocks, fat back, bacon, salt, lard, shortening, and cooking grease. These add too much saturated fat, calories, and salt to your food. The following tips make it easy to enjoy healthy soul food that tastes great:

- Steam your vegetables whenever you can. Use garlic, onions, and herbs for flavor. Use very small amounts of butter, cheese, and sauces.
- Use more herbs and spices to flavor greens and other dishes. Cut down on salt. Try adding Spanish onion and black pepper to black-eyed peas.
- Always use low-fat (1% or 2%) or skim milk for cooking instead of whole milk or cream.
- Put away that deep fat fryer or frying pan. Try broiling, roasting, baking, grilling, braising, or stir-frying with a little oil instead.

The following substitutions are other great ways to enjoy tasty and healthy cooking:

INSTEAD OF	TRY
Ham hocks and fat back	Turkey thighs
Pork bacon	Turkey bacon, lean ham, Canadian bacon
Lard, butter, or other hard fats	Small amount of vegetable oil
Pork sausage	Ground turkey breast
Ground beef and pork	Smoked turkey neck
Neck bone	Skinless chicken thighs
Regular bouillions and broths	Low-sodium bouillon and broths
Cream	Evaporated skim milk
Regular cheese	Low-fat or lite cheese
High-fat cut of beef*	Top round, eye of round, round steak, rump roast, sirloin tip, chuck arm, pot roast, short loin, extra lean ground beef
High-fat cut of pork*	Tenderloin, sirloin roast or chop, center cut loin chops
High-fat cut of lamb*	Foreshank, leg roast, leg chop, loin chop

*Sometimes, less tender cuts of meat like round or rump need marinating. To add flavor and tenderize, use an oil-free marinade. Place meat and marinade in a plastic bag and marinate for 1 to 2 hours at room temperature or overnight in the refrigerator. Throw away the marinade. Don't use it for basting while cooking the meat.

EAT A COLORFUL VARIETY OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES EVERY DAY PLEDGE

“So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.”
(1 Corinthians 10:31)

I know how important it is to eat a diet rich in fruits and vegetables every day for good health.

To help reach my fruit and vegetable goal, I pledge to do one or more of the following starting today:

- Add extra fruits and vegetables to every meal
 - Eat fruits and vegetables as snacks
 - Keep plenty of ready-to-eat fruits and vegetables at my home
 - Order a salad, side of vegetables, or fruit for dessert when eating out
 - Other
-

I pledge to support Body & Soul and the brothers and sisters in my congregation by doing one or more of the following starting today:

- Bring healthy fruit and vegetable dishes to church functions
 - Bring fruits and vegetables to church as snacks for the children in Sunday school
 - Attend at least _____ Body & Soul events at the church
 - Serve as a role model by eating a colorful variety of fruits and vegetables every day
 - Other
-

Signature

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