

ASK US ANYTHING SERIOUSLY, ANYTHING AT ALL...

THE SOAPBOX

Is 10 serves of fruit and vegies a day now the magic number?

IF YOU THOUGHT GETTING IN FIVE WAS TRICKY, A NEW STUDY BY IMPERIAL COLLEGE LONDON SUGGESTS WE NEED TO DOUBLE THAT TO PROTECT OURSELVES AGAINST DISEASE AND PREMATURE DEATH. WHAT'S A WOMAN TRYING NOT TO GO BANKRUPT BUYING PRODUCE TO DO? DON'T STRESS, SAYS WH NUTRITION EXPERT KRISTEN BECK...



This UK study, which draws on findings from up to two million people, concluded we should be "eating up to 800g [of fruit and veg] per day – equivalent to 10 portions, which is double the recommended amount." But, how realistic is this? Let's start with the maths. The Australian guidelines currently recommend a minimum of five x 75g serves of vegies (one serve = ½ cup cooked or one cup raw salad veg), plus two x 150g serves of fruit. This totals 675g – or 85 per cent of the 800g target suggested in the study. Quite a gap.

If your diet falls short, you're not alone – the Australian Bureau of Statistics revealed 93 per cent of us don't eat enough vegetables, and only half eat enough fruit. So, there's definitely a danger that a headline telling us to double our target may turn some people off trying.

Bottom line: while 800g may be ideal, the same study observed that a daily intake of even 200g of fruit and vegetables is associated with significant reduction in disease risk. And it doesn't matter if your vegies are raw, cooked, tinned or frozen – just get in as many as you can, as often as you can, and go for a wide variety. Get clued up about the benefits of greens for your gut health on p32.



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