



Powerhouse Picks

Ask a roomful of dietitians what fruits or veggies are at the top of their lists and you'll likely get a lot of hemming and hawing. That's because, as much as we all wish we could nosh on just one fruit or vegetable and get all the nutrients we need, it doesn't work that way.

"It's really hard to choose only two vegetables and two fruits because each fruit or vegetable provides very important vitamins and minerals," says Amy Jamieson-Petonic, R.D., spokesperson for the American Dietetic Association (ADA). "If you eliminate a balanced diet, you will put yourself at risk for nutrient deficiencies. That's why registered dietitians are always talking about **balance, variety, and moderation.**"

There may not be a secret produce pick dietitians swear by, but there are a few powerhouse fruits and vegetables they recommend adding to your shopping cart today (*above right*). That's because these options are loaded with nutrients that have been shown to **reduce the risk of cancer, heart disease, and other serious health problems.**

But that doesn't mean you should forget about fruits and veggies not listed. "The first—and probably most important—message is just to eat fruits and vegetables," says Bethany Thayer, R.D., another spokesperson for the ADA. "Although they vary in what they offer, all are good for you."

Vegetables

- Asparagus
- Broccoli
- Carrots
- Cauliflower
- Dark green leafy vegetables (such as spinach and kale)
- Squash
- Sweet bell peppers
- Sweet potatoes
- Tomatoes

Fruit

- Apricots
- Berries (such as blueberries, raspberries, and strawberries)
- Cantaloupe
- Citrus fruits (such as grapefruit and oranges)
- Kiwifruit
- Mango
- Papaya
- Star fruit
- Watermelon



If you aren't sure what to pick from the produce aisle, **go for color.** "I advise people to 'eat the rainbow,'" says Carrie Nielson, a Hy-Vee dietitian at Omaha No. 8 (Nebraska). "When it comes to produce, try to have five or six different colors a day."

To easily consume your daily requirement of fruit and vegetables, make sure you're eating them with every meal or snack. And **be adventurous.** "Don't be afraid to try new produce every week," Nielson says. "You might be surprised."

Because, it turns out, variety may be the real powerhouse.

Allergy-Proof Your House

Whether you suffer from seasonal allergies or find your eyes watering every time you pet your neighbor's dog, flare-ups are no fun. And the bummer is, a lot of your allergy troubles may originate from your own house. Limit allergy-induced sniffing, sneezing, and other symptoms with these suggestions:

Clean your room. "Even though you're sleeping, you're still spending time in your bedroom," says Karen Van Sant, registered nurse at Pediatric & Adult Allergy in Des Moines. To eliminate dust mites, enclose pillows, mattresses, and box springs in allergen-impermeable covers, and wash your linens in

hot water (at least 130°F) one to two times a week. Dust and vacuum frequently too.

Banish mold. High-humidity areas, such as your bathroom, kitchen, and basement, are prone to mold, so proper air circulation is crucial. Run the ventilation fan in your bathroom when showering. And always remove clothes from the washing machine promptly. Also use a dehumidifier—but regularly clean and empty the container to avoid mold buildup, says Dr. Robert Colman, allergist/immunologist at Pediatric & Adult Allergy in Des Moines.

Improve air quality. Invest in a HEPA (high-efficiency particulate air) vacuum filter to help trap allergens. Also, "change your furnace filters every four to six weeks," Van Sant says. "This is

especially important in September through March, when you're more likely to be inside." Purchasing a freestanding air filter with HEPA technology for use in rooms where you spend a lot of time may help too.

Choose smart materials. Replace thin, dust-collecting mini blinds with easy-to-clean window treatments, such as wood blinds, valances, or roller shades. Also opt for hardwood, linoleum, and tile flooring over carpet—or make sure your carpet has a tight weave with minimal or low padding, Colman suggests.

Limit pet exposure. Pet hair, dander, saliva, and urine all can trigger allergies, so vacuum and mop regularly. Brush Fido and Fluffy daily, bathe them weekly, and keep them out of the bedroom.