HOW MANY COLORS ARE YOU EATING?

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What are phytonutrients?

You may have heard the advice to eat five colors every day. Some even recommend eating five colors at every meal. The colors in fruits and vegetables are the result of phytonutrients which are found in all plants. Phytonutrient simply means plant-nutrient. These substances can be defined as everything in a plant that isn't a protein, fat, carbohydrate, vitamin, or mineral. It turns out there's a lot left over and phytonutrients outweigh the traditional nutrients 10,000 to one. These nutrients are the secret to why fruits and vegetables are so good for you.

What can phytonutrients do for you?

Carotenoids give fruit and vegetables their red, orange and yellow color and are just one type of phytonutrient. They have been shown to protect against certain cancers, heart disease and macular degeneration. Studies have shown increasing our consumption of fruits and vegetables can slow down the aging process and reduce our risk of chronic disease.

Ideas to increase your intake of phytonutrients

Make a Smoothie
Put frozen berries, yogurt or kefir, some avocado and banana in a blender and mix away.

Make a Salad
Ditch the store bought pre-made salads. Buy a spring mix of greens in the vegetable section. Add some red onion, cukes, green pepper, carrots, sunflower seeds, and dried cranberries for a taste sensation.

Buy a Steamer
Buy a cheap steamer and use it to cook vegetables for your supper. Nothing is easier than cooking with a steamer. It's fast and clean-up is a breeze. Add water, veggies, and turn it on. Poke the vegetables once in a while until they're cooked just the way you like them. Throw three different veggies in at once.

Leave a comment and let me know how you're adding more fruits and vegetables to your daily diet.

This post is part of Fight Back Friday, Monday Mania, and Real Food Wednesday.