Star Special

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DIGESTIVE HEALTH & YOU

Power up with fruits and veggies

ACCORDING to the National Health and Morbidity Survey (NHMS) 2024, only 13% of adolescents and 17% of adults consume two servings of fruits daily, while just 5% of adolescents and 12% of adults consume three servings of vegetables per day. The data showed that inadequate fruit and vegetable consumption contributed to insufficient vitamin A intake in 55% of adolescents and 63% of adults. As for vitamin C, about 78% of adolescents and 74% of adults consume insufficient vitamin C.

Fruits and vegetables are well-established sources of dietary fibre, essential vitamins and minerals. Numerous epidemiological and clinical studies have demonstrated that high consumption of fruits and vegetables is associated with a reduced risk and lower mortality rates from various chronic diseases, including cancer, type 2 diabetes mellitus and cardiovascular disease. This protective effect is primarily attributed to the presence of vitamins such as vitamin C, vitamin E and β-carotene.

According to Management and Science University (MSU) Faculty of Health and Life Sciences senior lecturer Dr Tan Bee Ling, "In addition to vitamins, fruits and vegetables are rich in bioactive compounds such as flavonoids, which exhibit a broad spectrum of biological activities including antioxidant, antimicrobial, anti-inflammatory and antitumor effects. Among these, anthocyanins represent one of the most prevalent classes of flavonoids in plant-based foods. These compounds are not only responsible for the characteristic red, blue and purple pigmentation but also contribute significantly to the overall antioxidant capacity of the diet.

Vitamin A is a fat-soluble vitamin essential for maintaining numerous physiological functions, including vision, immune function and cell growth and differentiation. In the visual cycle, vitamin A is a precursor to retinal, a component of rhodopsin, which is necessary for low-light and colour vision. It also plays a crucial role in maintaining the integrity of epithelial tissues and mucosal barriers, thereby supporting immune defence mechanisms. In addition, vitamin A regulates gene expression through its active metabolite, retinoic acid, which influences cellular growth and differentiation.

Carotenoids are a diverse class of naturally occurring pigments synthesised by plants, algae and photosynthetic bacteria, and they play multiple roles in both plant physiology and human health. Among these, lycopene is particularly notable for its potent photoprotective properties and its ability to quench singlet oxygen species, thereby mitigating oxidative damage. In non-photosynthetic plant tissues, carotenoids serve as precursors to phytohormones, act as visual attractants for pollinators through pigmentation, and antioxidants.

During fruit and seed ripening, carotenoid biosynthesis is often upregulated, leading to marked colour transitions such as the shift from green to red or purple hues. This change is largely attributed to the accumulation of anthocyanins and/or carotenoids. For instance, in tomatoes, the pericarp transitions from greenish-yellow to deep red during ripening due to the conversion of colourless phytoene into lycopene.

Carotenes represent some of the earliest intermediates in the carotenoid biosynthetic pathway and are ubiquitous across photosynthetic organisms. In the human diet, carotenoids such as β-carotene, α-carotene, β-cryptoxanthin, lycopene, lutein and zeaxanthin are of particular significance. These six compounds account for over 90% of total carotenoids detected in human tissues and are associated with various protective health effects. Several carotenoids, including β-carotene, α-carotene and β-cryptoxanthin, exhibit provitamin A activity and can be enzymatically converted into retinol, an essential nutrient for vision, immune function and epithelial integrity.

Ascorbic acid, commonly referred to as vitamin C, is a water-soluble essential micronutrient that plays a crucial role in various physiological processes. It is obtained primarily through the diet, with significant amounts found in a variety of plant-based foods, including cruciferous vegetables such as broccoli, tomatoes and citrus fruits like oranges and lemons.

Vitamin C functions as a potent antioxidant, capable of donating electrons to neutralise reactive oxygen species and other free radicals, thereby reducing oxidative stress within cells. Upon electron donation, vitamin C is converted into a relatively stable intermediate known as the ascorbyl radical, which can be recycled back to its active form. This redox activity contributes significantly to cellular defence mechanisms against oxidative damage.

Beyond its antioxidant role, vitamin C is involved in several biosynthetic pathways, including collagen synthesis, neurotransmitter production and immune system regulation. Accumulating evidence indicates that oxidative stress, driven by excessive reactive oxygen species accumulation, may induce the formation of mutagenic compounds and activate pro-inflammatory and oncogenic pathways. In this context, regular intake of antioxidant-rich foods, including those high in vitamin C, has been associated with a reduced risk of chronic diseases, such as cardiovascular disorders, certain cancers and age-related degenerative conditions.

Dr Tan Bee Ling.

Unwind and improve wellness

MODERN lifestyles often disrupt our digestive health—stress, irregular eating habits and prolonged sitting can all take a toll on our gut. A well-functioning digestive system is essential for nutrient absorption, energy levels and overall vitality. Whether you're winding down after a heavy meal or just seeking better digestive comfort, a massage chair can be a powerful ally in your wellness routine.

Gintell has introduced the Marvel Series Massage Chairs, featuring the Spider-Man Massage Chair, Black Panther Wellness Chair and Iron Man Wellness Chair, combining advanced massage technology with the power of superhero-inspired design. As Malaysia continues to prioritise healthcare and wellness, Gintell's innovative massage solutions align with the nation's growing focus on preventive healthcare, offering Malaysians a convenient way to reduce stress, improve circulation and enhance recovery—all from the comfort of their homes.

Inspired by the iconic Marvel superheroes, the massage chairs combine advanced technology with stylish designs, making them a standout addition to any home. They are built with 2nd Gen. 8-D Twin Rollers, where the massage rollers are segmented into two parts that allow users to choose their preferred massage techniques simultaneously to massage the upper and lower back. It provides an overall deeper, more precise and more intelligent massage on the shoulder, upper back, lower back, waist and buttocks.

The AI Fatigue Bio-Scan System is designed with your well-being in mind. Just place your finger on the biometric scanner for 30 seconds for it to measure and scan your heart rate, blood oxygen and fatigue index, which enables a personalised massage programme that is suitable to your current index.

Moreover, it features Malaysia's first 178° L-Flex Track, with "L" representing lumbar support. This unique dual massage track adjusts to fit body curves, targeting the upper and lower back at various angles for a precise, intense massage. Unlike fixed-angle chairs, it reclines up to 178°, effectively relieving lower back tension and promoting proper posture for a refreshed feeling.

Your body needs daily stretching, similar to a massage. That's why the built-in 230° Thai Massage full body stretching programme is beneficial for you. This programme is also intensified by the 178° L- Flex Track and 2nd Gen. 8-D Twin Rollers that recline at a 230° angle, which helps stretch out your body from neck to foot. Overall, it enhances your joint flexibility and mobility. This programme is fully endorsed and consulted by renowned tit-tar master (bone setting specialist) Datuk Seri master Chris Leong.

Aside from the usual AI Voice Control or touch screen controller, users can now seamlessly connect and control the massage chair via their smartphones through Bluetooth connectivity via the Gintell Super App OS application, which can be downloaded from Google Play Store and App Store.

The 360° Heat Spa Therapy provides warm compression from airbags specifically placed on the back, waist, and feet. It also features a cross-body strap designed for the abdomen. This therapy works wonders in relieving overall muscle tension and specifically targets the abdominal muscles. It includes a biometric scanner that measures and scans your heart rate, blood oxygen levels, and fatigue for 30 seconds, offering much-needed relief from muscle spasms or menstrual cramps.

The Gintell Marvel Series Massage Chairs can help relax your body and mind, promoting overall wellness and revitalisation.

To elevate the quality of your sleep, you may activate the three auto-programmes from the Brain Relief Therapy session in the Gintell Marvel Series massage chair. These three programmes are Total Relax, Mental Care and 230° Thai Massage, guaranteed to gently calm and relax your nerves whilst soft, soothing background music is played throughout the massage session.

Overall, the Gintell Marvel Series massage chair offers 20 automatic programmes, 11 unique massage techniques, adjustable massage speed and 4D intensity up to five levels, a wireless charging port with a USB connector, a VI Memory programme and the relaxing Zen Light, which enhances the user's mood and surrounding ambience.

Gintell is excited to launch its Grand Giveaway Campaign from now to July 31, offering customers a chance to win from over 700 prizes worth a total of RM1,000,000. As part of this exciting campaign, one lucky winner will drive home the Grand Prize—a brand-new BYD Sealion 7 Electric SUV. This initiative is part of Gintell's ongoing commitment to reward its loyal customers while promoting a lifestyle of wellness, innovation and luxury. Moreover, as an exclusive token of appreciation to all customers, Gintell is offering the luxury of the A-Pro Massage Chair at an all-time low price of RM1,988. This limited-time offer provides an opportunity to own a premium massage chair equipped with advanced features, ensuring ultimate comfort and relaxation. With only 100,000 units available, this offer is available while stocks last.

■ For further enquiry or pre-order, call 016-750 0998, visit *www.gintell.com* or visit your nearest Gintell showroom to experience the Gintell massage chair firsthand.