

Methods to reduce Pesticide Residues from Fruits & Vegetables at Households

Following methods can be used for reducing the pesticide residues in Fruits and Vegetables:-

- **Scrubbing:** Firm fruits and vegetables, like, melons, root vegetables, like, carrot and tubers like potatoes can be scrubbed by using a soft brush for 10 to 15 seconds and then rinse with slightly warm water.
- **Washing:** Pesticide residues can be reduced from fruits and vegetables by washing. Washing in clean running tap water reduces pesticide residues present on the surface of fruits and vegetables. Washing with 2% of salt water will remove most of the contact pesticide residues that normally appear on the surface of the fruits and vegetables. For better effect, it is recommended to go for 2-3 washings for fruits like grapes, apples, guava, plums, mangoes, peaches, pears etc. and vegetables like tomatoes, brinjal, okra etc. Carrot, okra, brinjal, cabbage and cauliflower can also be washed with 1% tamarind solution.
- **Vinegar Soak:** Make a solution of 10% vinegar in clean water and soak fruits and vegetables in it. Stir them around and rinse thoroughly with clean water after 15 minutes of soaking.
- **Peeling:** Contact pesticides that appear on the surface of the fruits and vegetables can be removed by peeling. Peeling and trimming fruits like mango, citrus, apple, pear, peach, kiwi and vegetables like gourds reduces pesticide residues. Discard outer layer of leafy vegetables like cabbage, lettuce etc. before washing.

Consumption of variety of fruits and vegetables helps in maintaining a balanced diet and also avoiding excessive consumption of same kind of pesticide residues from a small range of food items. Steaming and cooking of vegetables eliminate most of the residues that are not removed by washing or peeling. Don't use any soap, detergent, chemicals which could leave their own harmful residues.