What are the benefits of consuming fresh produce?

What is the difference between fresh produce and non-fresh produce? To begin, fresh produce is fruits and vegetables that have been picked or produced and have not been frozen. While non-fresh produce, also considered frozen produce or processed food, is food that has been frozen or food that's changed from its natural state. Which can ultimately cause the product to lose its vitamins, not to mention an increase in many health issues such as weight gain, risk of diabetes, an increase of high blood pressure, and many more. But eating fresh produce, on the other hand, can lower blood pressure, decrease digestive problems, reduce the risk of diseases, increase life expectancy, and much more. Although eating fresh produce is ideal, many people still don't do it. This stems from fresh produce being expensive, not having access to it, and the obvious being it isn't appealing or satisfying to eat. Sometimes it's also required to be cooked, which not only is time-consuming but can also be pricy, and people would rather purchase something fast, easy, and cheap, like ordering a dollar burger from a drive-through.

When comparing fresh produce to processed foods, a quote to remember is "quality over quantity." For instance, you can get 10 burgers for a dollar each, but the quality could be better; while having one homemade meal is less than having 10, it's still better due to the quality of the food. While eating a burger or a "fresh salad" from a fast food restaurant can be fast and less expensive, you have to remember that they have also been processed with oil, sugar, and salt. These ingredients are said to have many health risks and are packed for you to consume at a cheaper price than fresh produce because it's more expensive to farm than crops that get processed.

Here are three reasons why eating fresh produce is best for you:

1. Fresh fruits and vegetables are a great way to get vitamin A to help with vision growth and maintain a healthy reproductive system in both men and women. While vitamin C slows the rate

of early skin aging and can sometimes prevent dry skin, fine lines, and wrinkles. And lastly, Vitamin E prevents damage to our DNA.

2. Most fruits and vegetables have a lot of fiber to fill you up, which is great for maintaining a diet while eating healthy and staying full. While some have more fiber than others, this helps regulate the body's consumption of sugar and maintain hunger. Having too much sugar can result in many health concerns like weight gain, blood sugar problems, and heart disease, among other dangerous conditions.

3. Many fruits and vegetables contain *phytochemicals,* a chemical compound produced by plants to reduce inflammation, slow the growth of some cancer cells and help control hormones. For the health benefits of this chemical compound, consider eating broccoli, cabbage, collards, and watercress. All the healthy greens you can eat.

Overall, a great way to improve human health is by eating fruits and vegetables in many creative and enjoyable ways. It may take some time to get used to, but it will be worth it. Remember to eat the rainbow colors of produce to get all the nutrients your body needs.