



# Seed to Salad: Nutrition Super Heroes

## Overview

Nutrition Super Heroes is a game that gets young people on their feet and moving to learn about nutrition in the garden. Each participant assumes a Nutrient Super Hero “secret identity” such as calcium or vitamin C and must complete the obstacle course if a vegetable their nutrient (secret identity) is found in is called.

## Materials

- 12-15 wooden stakes (outside) or a roll of masking tape (inside)
- hula hoops, 5 gallon buckets, dish pans, garden gloves, jump ropes, etc: anything you can find to create reasonable obstacles
- vegetable cards & nutrient tags
- hat or basket for vegetable cards
- super hero capes (optional)

## Preparation

### Create Nutrient Tags and Veggie Cards

Use the templates provided or develop your own. You’ll need a nutrient tag for each participant (if you have a big group, feel free to have 2 of each nutrient). Choose vegetable cards that reflect the vegetables you grow in your garden or vegetables that participants have mentioned as their favorites.

### Set Up the Obstacle Course

If you’re working outside, use wooden stakes to create an outline of the human body in a level open area. Lay a garden glove at the end of each arm. Alternatively, you can use athletic field pant. Chalk the outline if the only open space is paved. If you’re working inside, use masking tape on the floor of a hallway or gym.

Add any obstacles you can think of such as buckets, hula hoops, create squiggly lines with jump ropes. Use obstacles to create major parts of the body: muscles in arms and legs can be buckets. The heart and stomach can be hula hoops. Use jump ropes to create arteries or intestines. Smaller dishpans can be other major organs.

## Rules of the game

The group leader will choose a vegetable out of a hat, read the name of the veggie and the nutrients (i.e. secret identities/super powers) that vegetable has. If your secret nutrient identity is among those listed for that vegetable you enter the obstacle course through the head, making sure to hit all the obstacles (i.e. all the parts of the body) before exiting through a foot.

Super heroes must keep their identities secret. Ask youth to keep track of how many times they run through the body. Also encourage them to pay attention to when the body is most full of super heroes. In a discussion at the end of the game you can ask questions that reveal what nutrients are the most readily available in foods and which are harder to get. By noticing when the body is very full versus very empty you can judge how nutrient rich a vegetable is.

## Playing the game

1. Hand out secret identity nutrient tags, and capes if desired, to each participant.
2. Explain the rules of the game and demonstrate running through the course to reach each obstacle.
3. Pull veggie cards out of a hat or basket one at a time.
4. Read the name of the veggie and the list of nutrients.
5. Wait until all super heroes are back at the head before reading the next vegetable card.

## After the game

6. After all the veggie cards are read, have the group gather. It's time to reveal secret identities. Have each participant read the description of their nutrient "fights infections; heals bones/wounds," and see if other participants can guess what nutrient they were.
7. Ask who ran through the course a lot, who only once or twice. What does that mean about your nutrient? Are you easy to find in foods?
8. What about how full the body was? What veggies had the most super heroes in the body? Which the least? What does that mean about how nutritious certain veggies are compared to others?
9. You can follow the activity with sampling veggies from the garden or from those used in the game.

## Adapting the game

When working with younger youth (pre-K, K, 1st and even 2<sup>nd</sup> grade) consider making the super hero identities the vegetables rather than the nutrients. Each youth assumes the role of "Captain Carrot" or "Powerful Peas." When the leader draws out of the hat, they call the nutrient (Calcium), defines it (helps build strong bones) and then lists all the veggies (super heroes) that contain these nutrients.

