

Top 5 Nutrition Tips for Seniors

1. Eat a good breakfast everyday.

Choose 2 whole grains, a fruit, a protein and a dairy for a great breakfast.

2. Get enough protein.

Smaller portions throughout the day might work best. Easy to digest proteins include eggs, tuna, boiled or canned chicken, and turkey. Milk is a good source of protein, too.

3. Drink plenty of water.

Eating lots of fruits and vegetables will also provide water. Soups, stews and gelatin have water, too. If you wait until you are thirsty to drink, you are all ready a little dehydrated! Drink to avoid thirst!

4. Fiber is essential.

Choose whole grain breads, high fiber cereal and 5 or more servings of fruit and vegetables daily.

5. Minimize high sugar, high sodium, and processed foods.

These kinds of foods provide a lot of salt and sugar, but little nutrient. Having trouble tasting food? Add herbs, spices, lemon, vinegar to your foods instead of salt and sugar.

Want to Remain Independent? Diet and Activity Are Key!

A big concern as we age is staying independent. Regular activity and a good diet help build muscle, bone and the endurance that allows us to maintain our quality of life as we age. Don't be caught low on energy! Good nutrition, regular activity and a good night's sleep all increase our energy reserves as well.

Research has shown that the rate of muscle loss increases after the age of 50. The good news is that staying active and eating well can help prevent or reverse the loss of lean body mass. This can reduce the risk for falling and fracturing bones, which can contribute to maintaining independence and a better quality of life.

A good diet starts with whole grains. Choose whole grain bread, crackers and cereal.

To repair cells and protect the heart eat brightly colored fruits (2-4 servings/day) and vegetables (3-5 servings/day). The brighter the color the more phytonutrients (plant nutrients) the fruit or vegetable contains which help fight diseases such as cancer, heart disease, macular (eye) degeneration.

Lean meat, poultry, fish, dry beans, eggs, and nuts (2-3 servings/day) contribute zinc, iron, protein and other nutrients to our diet. Zinc and iron are important for keeping our immune system healthy. Good quality protein helps us maintain our muscles as we get older. Zinc helps us retain our ability to taste.



We need milk our entire lives. Low-fat milk and other low-fat dairy foods (2-3 servings/day) contain significant amounts of protein and are a great source of calcium, magnesium, and other vitamins and minerals that help us maintain our bone mass.

Lastly, as we age, our ability to regulate our fluid balance may become compromised, so be sure to include plenty of fluids in your daily diet. There is no rule of thumb, but keep in mind that an activity level that results in sweating requires a higher level of fluid intake. Water is an excellent source of fluid, but so are many fruits, vegetable and juices.