

**FREE
GUIDEBOOK**

**A SENIOR'S GUIDE
TO GOOD
NUTRITION**

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A SENIOR'S GUIDE to Good Nutrition

A Senior's Guide to Good Nutrition

Good nutrition is vital to feeling your best and remaining active as you age. It's important to eat a variety of healthy foods, but changes in our bodies and lifestyles can make that difficult.

Consider these facts about nutrition for seniors and practical strategies for sticking to a healthy diet.

Nutrition Basics for Seniors

- 1. Know how many calories you need.** *Due to a slowing metabolism, most people require fewer calories as they age.* The exact number varies by age, gender and activity level. For example, a sedentary woman over age 50 needs about 1,600 calories a day while an active man may need at least 2,400.
- 2. Avoid empty calories.** One of the easiest ways to avoid extra pounds is to cut out junk food. Skip the fast food restaurants and munch on carrot sticks instead of potato chips.
- 3. Focus on nutrient dense foods.** Get most of your calories from vegetables, fruits and whole grains. In addition to the nutrients, they provide plenty of fiber **which helps improve your digestion. Nutrient dense foods may even help lower your cholesterol and blood sugar levels.**
- 4. Select healthy fats.** Keep eating fats with an emphasis on monounsaturated and polyunsaturated versions. Limit saturated fats that come from animals and trans fats found in many processed foods.

5. Pick lean proteins. Get your protein from lean sources. Try to eat fish at least twice a week. Make a pot of three bean chili.

Practical Eating Strategies for Seniors

1. Talk with your doctor. Your doctor can help you eat right and avoid malnutrition. You may need to follow a specific diet to manage conditions like heart disease or diabetes. Ask your doctor if you think a medication is interfering with your diet. Your doctor may suggest ways to cope with it or change your prescription.

2. **See your dentist. Your dentist can also help you stay healthy. Proper dental care** or dentures will help you eat the foods you love. If your mouth is temporarily sore, stick to soft fare like yogurt drinks and soup.

3. Detect food sensitivities. As you age, you may find that your favorite foods are creating new issues. Ask your doctor to test you if you're experiencing symptoms like diarrhea or gas. For conditions like lactose intolerance, try yogurt or almond milk instead of your usual milk.

4. Outsmart your taste buds. Even our taste buds change as we age. If you have a more intense sweet tooth, try satisfying it with sugar free gum. You may be less sensitive to salty and bitter flavors, so *experiment with spices to stimulate your appetite.*

5. Drink more water. Our sense of thirst also declines as we get older. Sip water or decaffeinated tea throughout the day rather than waiting until you feel thirsty.

6. Cut back on salt. After the age of 51, we only need about 2/3 of a teaspoon of salt a day. Go easy with the salt shaker and *opt for whole foods* rather than processed items.
7. Dine with others. Seniors sometimes lose interest in eating when it's a solitary experience. Join a social club or invite guests over. Studies show that we eat more when we share meals.
8. Practice food safety. If your immune system weakens over the years, you need to take extra precautions in the kitchen. Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. Check expiration dates. When in doubt, throw it out.
9. Access community services. There is help available for seniors with limited **mobility or finances**. **Contact your local agency on aging for services that can help you eat better.** Meals on Wheels will deliver food right to your door.

Your senior years can be the best time of your life if you remain healthy and active. Eating a healthy diet plays a big role in aging well.



Contact us today to set an appointment with one of our senior care professionals to learn more about our services.

CALL US: (203) 927-7543

EMAIL US: homecare@atouchoflovehomecare.com

www.atouchoflovehomecare.com