

ELDERLY NUTRITION PROJECT  
**TOOLS**  
READY TO USE EDUCATION MATERIALS

**PRINTED IN 1994**

**REVISED IN 2000**

**Kentucky River Foothills Development Council, Inc.**

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#### INTRODUCTION

This booklet provides you with educational materials that are ready to use. You can reproduce the materials in any quantity you need on your office copier or at a local copy shop. All materials are copyright free and can be reproduced in any quantity for nonprofit purposes. You will get the best success with most of these items by using colored paper. These materials are designed to be accessible to low-literate audiences. Easy to read typefaces have been selected and all materials have been tested to be at the 4th grade reading level or less. This guide is intended only to provide general information and not medical advice. For specific medical advice consult your doctor.

#### FACTSHEETS

These one page sheets cover a variety of topics related to nutrition and aging from fiber to cholesterol. You may find them useful as a starting point for a nutrition education workshop or as an insert into your center newsletter. Note: You can type in your agency name on the original in the lower right hand corner to personalize.

#### FOOD GUIDE PYRAMID

The latest teaching tool in nutrition is the Food Guide Pyramid. It's a great way to put the U.S. Dietary Guidelines into practice as part of your daily diet. Reproduce this flyer and share this important information with older adults in your community.

#### TABLE TENTS

Ever notice it is tough to eat cereal without reading the box? Table tents are based on this idea. Copy the sheet onto heavy weight colored paper. Cut into half and fold each half. Place on tables at meal sites. They can brighten up the tables and encourage conversation about nutrition topics.

#### NUTRITION RISK SCREENING

Reproduce this copyright free sheet from the Nutrition Screening Initiative and use it to screen your clients for nutrition risk. This tool can help you understand and identify nutrition risk factors with your clients. It can be incorporated as part of your intake or assessment procedures.

#### SIGNS

Need to publicize nutrition education or food programs in your community? You can fill in your local information on the signs in this guide and then make copies.

*The project was funded by the US. Department for Health and Human Services and the Kentucky Cabinet for Human Resources, The Department for Social Services*

# Aging & Nutrition



**Get the Facts** Getting older affects your nutrition. Knowing information about nutrition and aging can help you live healthier.

Many older people suffer from chronic health conditions. Many of the diseases like heart disease, cancer, high blood pressure, diabetes, stroke and osteoporosis are related to diet.

Often times part of aging is declining health and vitality. But, nutrition is one part of health we can control. Eating a healthy diet can make you feel better. Eating poorly can make you have less energy and feel tired.

## Eating Right Can

- Help strengthen your body
- Give you more energy
- Improve your sense of well being
- Make you get sick less often

**Nutrition Risks** Sometimes eating right is tough for older people. Senses of taste and smell change. Living situations change too. You need to be aware of the many things that can affect your

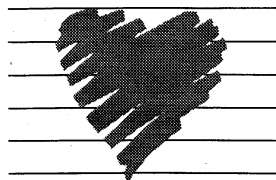
- \*disease or chronic conditions
- \*tooth loss or mouth pain appetite
- \*changes lesser taste of sense of taste and smell
- \*poverty
- \*multiple medicines
- \*inability to cook without help living alone

**Ask for Help** You can ask for help. Talk to any of the people below.

- \*local agency on aging
- \* friends
- \* neighbors
- \* family members
- \* doctor
- \* health department

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# About Cholesterol



## What is it?

Cholesterol is a fat like substance found in foods. Cholesterol is only in animal foods like meat, eggs, milk and cheese. Foods like fruit, vegetables, breads, cereals and beans do NOT have any cholesterol.

Your body can turn fat, especially saturated fat, into cholesterol. Foods can claim to be low in cholesterol; but watch out if they are high in fat.

**Too Much is Bad** Your body needs some cholesterol. If you eat more cholesterol they you need it can build up in your arteries. This is the biggest cause of heart attacks and strokes.

## Cholesterol Tests

Simple, inexpensive tests are available to check cholesterol levels. Cholesterol tests show your cholesterol rate. The test also shows the ratio of "good" cholesterol and "bad" cholesterol. Ask your doctor or health department about the test.

## Cut Your Cholesterol

- V Eat less fat. To do this, read labels and avoid fats; especially saturated fats.
- V Eat more fruits and vegetables.
- V Exercise - it can increase your rate of good cholesterol.
- V Quit smoking.
- V Lose weight.
- V Eat more fiber. Foods with fiber include fruit, bran and dried beans.
- V Buy oil that is liquid at room temperature. Also, use less oil.

## Eat A Variety of Foods



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# Calcium



## Why You Need Calcium

Calcium builds the health of your bones. Too little calcium can lead to bone loss. Daily loss of bones overtime can result in osteoporosis. Osteoporosis can increase the risk of fractures. Fractures can lead to pain and disability.

## Osteoporosis

Osteoporosis happens over many years. You can have osteoporosis and not know it. Many people find out they have osteoporosis after they fracture or break a bone. Osteoporosis mainly affects women. 1 in 4 elderly women have osteoporosis.

## Risk Factors

Many things affect the health of your bones. These include:

- lack of exercise
- hormonal changes
- dietary deficiency
- cigarette smoking
- alcohol
- too much protein
- having a small body frame

## Prevention: Calcium & Vitamin D

Bone loss often begins at 35. But, even when you are older you can still try to prevent bone loss. First, you need to eat plenty of calcium. Also, you need plenty of Vitamin D. Vitamin D helps your body absorb calcium. Vitamin D is found in vitamin fortified milk and cereal and in eggs and liver. Your body can absorb Vitamin D from sunshine too.

**How Much is Enough** Elderly people need 1,000 mg-1,500 mg of calcium each day. This is more than the 800 mg younger people need. Your body is less effective in absorbing calcium as you age. This means you need more calcium than you did when you were younger.

## High Calcium Foods

Plain or low-fat yogurt 1 cup: **350 mg.**

Dry non-fat milk 1/4 cup: **350-450 mg.**

Low-fat milk 1 cup: **250-450 mg.**

Cheddar cheese 1 oz.: **150-250 mg.**

Salmon with bones 3 oz.: **250-250 mg.**

Collard greens 1/2 cup: **250-250 mg.**

Dried beans 1 CUP: **50-150 mg.**

Broccoli 1/2 cup: **100 mg.**

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# Cut Back on Fat



## Why Cut Back on Fat

Most Americans eat way too much fat. Your body needs some fat. Fat provides energy, cushions vital organs and provides fatty acids for healthy skin. But most of us eat much more fat than we need.

Too much fat in our diet can cause breast, colon and prostate cancer. It also causes heart disease which is the number one cause of death in America.

The worst kind of fat is saturated fat. It comes from animal foods like meat and milk. Too much saturated fat gathers in the arteries of the heart blocking the flow of blood. It is a lot like a drinking straw that gets clogged up with butter so nothing can pass.

## You Can

- \* Read food labels and pick low fat foods.
- \* Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables and grains. They are naturally low in fat.
- \* Try low fat cooking methods.

## Low Fat Cooking Tips

- \* Fry less often. Try steaming, broiling, poaching, roasting and simmering.
- \* To add flavor, use herbs, spices, lemon juice or chili powder. Avoid adding fat, butter and meat as flavorings.
- \* Don't add meat or fats to vegetables.
- \* Try a meatless dinner. Try vegetarian chili, spaghetti with tomato sauce or bean burritos.
- \* Chill soups and stews and skim off the fat.
- \* Eat smaller servings of meat, bigger servings of fruits, vegetables and grains.
- \* When sauteing use non-stick spray or water in a seasoned cast iron skillet.

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# Dietary Guidelines

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## Learn the Guidelines

Think healthy eating has changed a lot since you were younger? Do you find it hard to keep up with all the “new stuff” like fat, cholesterol and fiber. You might find learning the U.S. Dietary Guidelines will help. The guidelines are suggestions for healthier eating. Following the U.S. Dietary Guidelines can help you eat a healthier diet. The guidelines help you:

- \* Get the fiber and nutrients you need for good health.
- \* Get enough calories to maintain the weight you want. b Avoid too much fat, sugar and salt.

### 1. Eat A Variety of Foods

This includes plenty of fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

**2. Maintain a Healthy Weight** Find a healthy weight for you and stick to it. Being overweight can put you at greater risk for high blood pressure and heart disease. Underweight people may not get enough of the basic nutrients their bodies need.

**3. Choose a diet low in fat, saturated fat and cholesterol** Most Americans eat too much fat. A high fat diet is linked to cancer, heart disease and other illness.

**4. Choose a diet with plenty of vegetables, fruits and grain products.** These foods are high in carbohydrates, fiber, vitamins and minerals. They are low in fat.

**5. Use sugars only in moderation** Many foods high in sugar are low in nutrients. High sugar snacks provide lots of calories and little else.

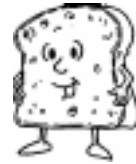
**6. Use salt and sodium only in moderation** Most of us eat way too much salt. That could be one reason as many as one in three adults have high blood pressure.

**7. If you drink alcoholic drinks, do so in moderation.** Alcoholic beverages have calories but few nutrients. Moderation means no more than 1 to 2 drinks per day.

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# Fiber



## Fiber is Your Friend

- >Fiber helps you digest.
- >Fiber helps food move through your body.
- >Fiber prevents constipation.
- >Fiber cuts your risk of colon cancer and bowel cancer.

## Getting More Fiber

Most Americans get only about half of the fiber we need. The best way to add fiber is to eat more fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains. Adding a lot of fiber to your diet quickly can result in gas or diarrhea. So, build the fiber in your diet slowly.

Some people also take fiber supplements like Metamucil. These supplements can help relieve constipation. If you are thinking about a supplement be aware:

- > They can cause bloating, diarrhea and gas
- > They can interfere with medication. So ask your doctor first.
- > Eating more fiber in foods may be a better idea.

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## Find the Fiber

You need 25 to 30 grams of fiber each day. Want to know how much fiber is in your food? Look at the new food labels. They give the amount of dietary fiber. The percentage shows how much of your daily fiber is provided by that food.

## Fiber in Foods

|                 |                         |
|-----------------|-------------------------|
| <b>15 grams</b> | 1 cup red kidney beans  |
| <b>5 grams</b>  | 1 potato with skin      |
| <b>13 grams</b> | 1/2 cup all bran cereal |
| <b>3 grams</b>  | 1 medium apple          |
| <b>4 grams</b>  | 1 cup broccoli          |
| <b>9 grams</b>  | 5 dried figs            |
| <b>8 grams</b>  | 5 dried prunes          |
| <b>1 grams</b>  | 1 stalk celery          |
| <b>5 grams</b>  | 1/2 cup sweet corn      |

## Which is Your Breakfast?

### *High Fiber Breakfast*

|                         |                 |
|-------------------------|-----------------|
| 1/2 cup all bran cereal | 13 grams        |
| 5 uncooked figs         | 12 grams        |
| <b>Total:</b>           | <b>25 grams</b> |

### *Low Fiber Breakfast*

|                |                |
|----------------|----------------|
| 1 cup Cheerios | 1 gram         |
| Orange juice   | 1 gram         |
| <b>Total:</b>  | <b>2 grams</b> |

# Fruit



**Why Eat Fruit?** Fruit has vitamins like A and C. Vitamin A helps you see at night. Vitamin C helps you fight infection. Some fruit is also high in the mineral potassium. Potassium may help prevent high blood pressure.

Fruit is also high in fiber. Fiber helps prevent constipation.

Fruit is a good sweet treat. You can eat fruit instead of sugary snacks.

## Nature's Sweets Eat 2 to 4 a Day

Try to eat 2 to 4 servings of fruit each day. A serving is one medium apple, banana, orange or 1/2 cup chopped fruit.



## Shopping Tips

- > Pick fresh fruit, 100% fruit juice, frozen fruit or canned fruit.
- > Don't buy **canned** fruit in heavy syrup unless you need to gain weight.
- > Pick plenty of citrus fruits, melons and berries.
- > The lowest cost fresh fruits are apples, bananas, oranges.

## Serving Ideas

- > Try fruit salad. Make a mix, of chopped fruits and nuts.
- > Spread peanut butter on apple slices.
- > Add cut up oranges, apples and pears to a salad.

### Baked Apples

2 large apples  
1/8 cup sugar  
1 T. cinnamon  
1 T. raisins  
1/2 cup water

Cut core out of apples. Put apples in baking dish.

Mix sugar, cinnamon and raisins. Put mix in apple center. Pour the water around apples. Cover dish. Bake at 350 degrees for 50 minutes.

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# Food & Medicines



## Prescription Drugs

Most older people take more than 2 prescription medications a day. Do you? Do you know that food and drugs affect each other? The foods you eat can affect how well drugs work in your body. The drugs you take can affect how well your body uses food.

## Drugs can affect

- >How well your body absorbs food
- >Your appetite b Vitamin and mineral absorption

## Food can affect

- >How well your body can use drugs. For example, some drugs need to be taken on an empty stomach. Some drugs need to be taken only after you eat.
- >Your strength and overall health.

## Common Drugs and Your Diet

**Diuretics:** Used to treat high blood pressure. Can lead to your body passing out potassium. Be sure to consume fruit juices and bananas to replace potassium.

**Aspirin:** Often taken in large doses to treat arthritis. Too much over a long time can cause problems with internal bleeding and lead to anemia.

**Laxatives:** Laxatives speed food through the body. This means your body cannot absorb nutrients. Used over a long period of time this can cause problems.

**Vitamin Supplements:** Vitamins and minerals in large doses can be bad for you. Check with your doctor before taking supplements.



## The Best Advice: Ask Your Doctor

1. Should this medicine be taken on a full or empty stomach?
2. Will this medicine affect my diet?

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# Food Safety



## **The 24 Hour Flu?**

Ever had the 24 hour flu? That upset stomach that you thought was the flu may have been food poisoning. Food poisoning caused 6 million cases of illness in the U.S. last year. Food poisoning can be very serious; especially for people with already weak bodies.

## **A Special Concern for Older People**

Older people are at a higher risk of food poisoning for several reasons. As you've gotten older have you noticed your sense of taste and smell aren't as good? Most people find their sense of taste and smell lessen with age. This makes it harder to tell if foods are spoiled.

Many older people live alone. This increases the chance of a large container of food going bad before it can be eaten. Elderly people may be frail and more likely to suffer severe consequences of food poisoning. These factors make older people at higher risk for food poisoning.

## **Safe Shopping Tips**

- > Buy only the quantity of food you can eat before it spoils. Bigger containers don't save you money if most of the food goes bad. '
- > Check freshness dates: especially on dairy products.
- > Buy smaller packages of meat. If the packages of meat are more than you can use safely, ask the store to make you a smaller package; or, freeze part of it.
- > Frozen vegetables: can be a great buy. You can eat just the amount you want each day.

## **Safe Kitchen Tips**

- > Clean all cutting surfaces and knives carefully.
- > Put leftovers in the refrigerator within 2 hours.
- > Any fresh meat, poultry or fish that will not be eaten in the next few days should be frozen.
- > Frozen foods should be defrosted in the refrigerator or microwave.
- > Cook larger amounts of soups casseroles, soups etc. You can refrigerate leftovers for a couple of days. Label other leftovers and freeze.

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# Food Stamps



## What are Food Stamps?

EBT (Electronic benefits transfer) is the new way you receive food stamp benefits. Instead of receiving food stamp coupons in the mail, your benefits are put into a cash or food stamp account set up for you. To buy food you can use the EBT card at local grocery stores.

## Who Gets Food Stamps?

Many elderly people can get Food Stamps. You can own your own house and car and get Food Stamps. Most of the elderly people who can get Food Stamps have not applied.

## Food Stamps and the Elderly

It is easier for elderly people to get Food Stamps. If you have at least one person in your house who is 60 or older:

- > You must have an income less than 165% of poverty (that is about \$1,350 a month for two people) If your income is higher than this you can still get Food Stamps if you have high medical or housing costs.
- > You must have less than \$3,000 in the bank.

## To APPLY

Go to the Department for Community-Based Services. (If you can't go to the office give a friend or relative written permission to go for you.)

You will get an appointment to meet with a worker. Take information about your income and bills with you. They will need an ID, recent utility bills, bank account statements, social security cards and a copy of your award letter or income statement. You will find out if you get Food Stamps within 30 days.

## You Have a Right...

- To apply for Food Stamps.
- To have a friend or family member to apply for you.
- To talk to a caseworker the first day you apply to see if you are eligible for food stamps.

Call your local Department Community-Based Services office or the state office at 1-800-372-2973

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# Living Alone



## Eating and Living Alone

Many older people are living alone. Older people living alone are much more likely to suffer from poor nutrition. They may eat too much or not enough.

Eating well when you live alone can be hard. People living alone often say:

- ) I find it hard to cook for just one.
- ) I find food spoils too quickly.
- ) I may forget to eat a meal.
- ) I eat sugary snacks instead of meals
- ) I may eat just 1 meal a day.
- ) I can't afford to eat healthy.
- ) I just don't feel like eating. Food doesn't taste good.

## Beware: Nutrition Risk

Do you find yourself skipping meals? Beware! Skipping meals and eating sugary snacks are risky. As the old saying goes, you are what you eat. What you eat affects your health, how you feel and how much energy you have. Older people living alone need to pay special attention to their diets.

## Worried About Your Diet?

Do you find it hard to eat right? If you are worried about your diet, you may find it helpful to talk to your doctor or health department about it. Also, call your area agency on aging. They can tell you about local programs that can help. You may also find the ideas below helpful.

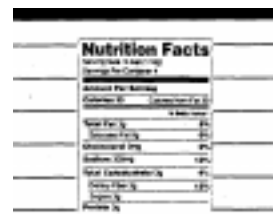
## Coping with Living Alone

- ) Eat at your senior meal site.
- ) Invite a friend at mealtime.
- ) Start a potluck club.
- ) Socialize at meals.
- ) Try new foods or spices to revive your appetite.
- ) Cook for 2: freeze half for later.
- ) Try a change of scene like eating in a new room or with music.
- ) Set a schedule for eating.

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# Reading Labels



## It is Simple to Eat Right

The new food label makes it simple to eat healthy. Read the labels to choose foods that make up a healthy diet. The labels can help you avoid foods that are high in sodium, fat and cholesterol. This can help you cut your risk for some diseases.

### Nutrition Facts

Serving Size 1/2 cup (114g)  
Servings Per Container 4

#### Amount Per Serving

Calories 90      Calories from Fat 30

% Daily Value\*

**Total Fat 3g**      5%  
Saturated Fat      0%

**Cholesterol 0mg**      0%

**Sodium 300mg**      Total      13%

**Carbohydrate 13g**

Dietary Fiber 3g

Sugars 3g

**Protein 3g**

Vitamin A      4%      Vitamin C      4%

\* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2,000 calorie diet. Your daily values may be higher or lower depending on your calorie needs:

|             |           | 2,000                      | 2,500 |
|-------------|-----------|----------------------------|-------|
| Total Fat   | Less than | 6%                         | ml    |
| Sat Fat     | Less than | 20g                        | 2%    |
| Cholesterol | Less than | 300mg                      | =ow   |
| Sodium      | Less than | 2,400mg                    |       |
|             |           | 2,400mg Total Carbohydrate | 375g  |
| Fiber       |           | 2%                         | 30g   |

Calories per gram:  
Fat 9      Carbohydrate 4      Protein 4

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## What is % Daily Value

Percent daily values help you see how the food fits into your diet for the day. Let's look at an example of a candy bar that has 50% daily value for fat. This means the food has half of the fat you can eat for the entire day.

## Using % Daily Value

Try to pick food with low % Daily Values for sodium, fat, saturated fat and cholesterol. Try to pick foods with **high** % daily values for calcium, fiber, iron and vitamins.

## 2,000 Calorie Diet

The % Daily Values given are for a 2,000 calorie diet. You may need more or less depending on your body. The average woman needs about 1,800 calories.

## Ingredients

You will also want to look at the list of ingredients on the package. It lists the ingredients in order from most to least. Look for products with the most healthy foods listed first.

# Salt & Sodium

## About Sodium

Most of the salt in your diet comes from ready to eat foods. Eating less salt /sodium may be better for your heart and blood pressure.

## High Sodium Foods

- cured bacon and hotdogs
- canned vegetables J cheeses
- salad dressings
- canned soups
- frozen dinners
- chips/snack crackers
- pickles J lunch meat

## Did You Know...

Foods can be high in salt and not taste salty. Many prepared foods like baked goods, mixes etc. are high in salt.

Sodium occurs naturally in many foods. Your body needs some sodium to be healthy. But, most of us eat way too much sodium.

If bacon does not taste too salty to you, it is a sign that you need to cut way back on sodium.

## Eat Less Salt

- > Don't add salt to food when cooking.
- > Eat fresh or frozen vegetables. They are lower in sodium.
- > Use herbs and spices instead of salt.
- > Get the salt shaker off the table.
- > Read labels.
- > Try low sodium products.

## QUIZ

### How Much Salt Should You Eat Each Day?



Answer: The picture on the left. We need only 1/4 teaspoon of salt a day. Most of us eat 10 to 20 times that amount.

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# Save \$ On Food



## **Saving Money**

Many older people on fixed incomes are looking for ways to save money on food. You may find some of these tips helpful.

## **Buy the Right Size**

Buy the biggest size product you can use before it goes bad. Buying the right amount can be tough for people living alone. Try freezing half of the food for later.

## **Look at Specials & Sales Carefully**

Some specials and sale items are a good deal and others are not. A good deal is a cheaper price on a product you need to buy. The sale is not a good deal if it gets you to buy something you don't really need.

## **Avoid High Price Areas**

The end of aisles and near the cash register are high price areas. These items may look like good deals; usually they are not. You may also find lower price foods are at the top or bottom of shelves. Higher price items are often at eye level.

## **Plan Ahead**

Before you shop plan your meals. Make a list. Stick to it.

## **Eat Before You Shop**

You will buy less junk food. Everything looks good when you are hungry. You will probably buy more than you need.

## **Look at Unit Prices**

Compare different brand and sizes by using unit prices. Often store brands are just as good and they can save you money.

**Help is Available** There are food programs that can help you get by. You can eat meals at a group meal site for older adults. Call your local agency on aging for more information.

Many elderly people get Food Stamps. But less than half of the older people who need Food Stamps get them. You can own a house and still get Food Stamps. Call your local Department for Social Insurance for more information.

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# Try a Low Fat Recipe



## Change Your Recipes

Interested in trying a lower fat diet? You don't have to give up all your favorite foods. Simple changes in your favorite recipes can make them lower in fat.

|  |                  |                                  |
|--|------------------|----------------------------------|
| Lard or butter                             | <b>Change To</b> | Small amount of vegetable oil    |
| Whole Milk                                 | <b>Change To</b> | Skim or Low-fat Milk             |
| Mayonnaise or salad dressing on sandwiches | <b>Change To</b> | Mustard                          |
| Regular mayonnaise in salads               | <b>Change To</b> | Low fat mayo or yogurt           |
| High fat meat (like ground beef or pork)   | <b>Change To</b> | Lean meat or other protein foods |
| Chicken with skin                          | <b>Change To</b> | Chicken with no skin             |
| Pork Bacon                                 | <b>Change To</b> | Turkey bacon, lean ham           |

## Low-Fat Shopping Tips



Read fat content on food labels.

Shop carefully for prepared foods like crackers, salad dressing and cookies. Many of these foods are high in fat.

**Buy** plenty of fruits, vegetables and grains. They are naturally low fat.

# Vegetables



## Good For You

Your mother probably told you to eat your vegetables. She was right. Vegetables are important for good health. Vegetables are low in fat, high in fiber and vitamins.

Vegetables add lots of good things to your meals. Such as: color, texture, flavor, vitamins, minerals, crunch and fiber.

## Eat 3 to 5 Servings

A serving is:

1 cup raw leafy vegetables or  
1/2 cup cooked or raw vegetables

Try to eat a variety of vegetables including leafy green, dark green, starchy, legumes and deep yellow.

## Cook it Healthy

Keep your vegetables healthy by cooking them healthy. Try eating vegetables raw. Or, you can steam them. The key is to cook vegetables for a little time, in a little water, at a low temperature. Try not to add fat or salt. Be careful of toppings, too.

## Try It! Try It! Try It! Try It!



Sprinkle cinnamon on sweet potato or acorn squash



Cook carrots with pineapple or orange juice.



Buy dark leafy green lettuce instead of iceberg.



Squeeze fresh lemon juice on broccoli

For the Kids: Ants on a Log  
Stuff celery with peanut butter and top with raisins.



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## Fiber

Fiber helps you digest. Fluids and fiber prevent constipation. Too little fiber puts you at risk for colon cancer, bowel cancer and constipation.

It is easy to eat more fiber. Eat plenty of fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains.

## Three Healthy Ideas

1. Drink an extra glass of water when you get up in the morning.
2. Eat 5 servings of fruits and vegetables each day.
3. Drink only skim or low fat milk.

## Enjoy Snacks

Snacks can be healthy. But, some snacks add extra calories or salt, but little nutrition. Skip snacks like candy, cake, cookies and potato chips. Try these snack ideas:

- \* plain popcorn
- \* graham crackers
- \* fruit
- \* yogurt
- \*cereal
- \*cheese and crackers
- \* vegetable sticks
- \* bagel

## Drink Water!

8 glasses or more. That is how much water your body needs each day. Water helps in digestion, prevents constipation and aids in circulation. Try this tip. Fill a pitcher with 8 glasses of water at the beginning of the day. Put the pitcher in your refrigerator. Try to empty the pitcher each day.

## Dietary Supplements

Most people get the vitamins and minerals they need from the food they eat. There are a lot of dietary supplements you can buy. Some of these dietary supplements have 10 to 100 times the recommended amount of a vitamin or mineral.

These supplements can be a waste of money or dangerous to your health. Before you take a dietary supplement, you may want to contact your doctor.

Bread. Cereal.

## Enjoy Fruit

You need 2-4 servings of fruit a day. Fruit is high in fiber, vitamins and taste. Fruit adds to any meal and makes a great snack.

## Enjoy Vegetables

You need 3-5 servings of vegetables a day. Vegetables are high in fiber and vitamins.

## Quiz: Find the Fiber

Try this fiber quiz. Which one of the foods below has the most fiber? Which has the least?

*Celery*

*Kidney beans*

*Grapenuts*

**Answer:** Celery has the least fiber-just because something is crunchy doesn't mean it is high in fiber. Kidney beans have the most. Grapenuts have a moderate amount of fiber.

## Magic Foods

Often we hear that some foods like oat bran or fish oil have special powers. You may have heard claims that one food or another alone can make you healthy.

Not true! The best diet advice is still VARIETY. Choose a balance of healthy foods like whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. Try to cut back on salt and fat. For a healthy diet, eat a variety of foods each day.

## Try Low Fat Cooking

- Fry less often; try steaming, broiling, poaching and roasting.
- To add flavor: use herbs, spices, lemon juice or chili powder.
- Don't add meat or fats to vegetables.
- Trim fat off meat; take skin off chicken.

## Just for FUN: Fruit Quiz

**Question:** Which fruit do Americans eat the most of?

**Answer:** Bananas. An average of 22 pounds per person. Bananas are a good source of vitamin B6, vitamin C and potassium. They are also an easily digestible source of fiber. Bananas can prevent diarrhea and constipation.

## Calcium Facts

Calcium helps prevent bone loss that leads to osteoporosis. Calcium also may help decrease high blood pressure.

Most people need from 1,000 to 1,500 mg of calcium a day.

## Calcium Quiz

Which foods listed below are high in calcium? milk, yogurt, tofu, black beans, chick peas, broccoli, canned salmon, or mustard and turnip greens.

**Answer:** All of the above.

## Cut Back on Salt/Sodium

Too much sodium can hurt your health. It can put you at risk for high blood pressure. Try these ideas for cutting back on sodium.

- Know most salt in our diet comes from pre-made and package foods. Read labels carefully.
- Get the salt shaker off the table.
- Don't add salt to food when cooking.

## Sodium Quiz

**Question:** How much salt (sodium) does your body need each day?

- A. 1/4 teaspoon
- B. 1 teaspoon
- C. 1 tablespoon

**Answer:** 1/4 teaspoon. Most people eat way too much salt. Many people eat 20 times more salt than their bodies need.

## Just for FUN Presidential Food Quiz

**Question:** Name the president that you think of when you read each food.

1. broccoli
2. peanuts
3. jelly beans

**Answer:**

1. Bush hated broccoli
2. Carter was a peanut farmer
3. Reagan loved jelly beans

## **Tough Time Getting By? Food Stamps Can Help**

Food Stamps can help you afford to buy the food you need. Many elderly people are qualified to get Food Stamps. You must have a low income and limited resources. You can own your home and receive Food Stamps. Find out more. Call your local Food Stamp Office.

# Are You Drinking Enough Water?

Most people may be dehydrated and unaware of it. Dehydration takes place with rapid loss of fluid in the body. The sense of thirst declines as we age. Fever, diarrhea, and vomiting can all make us feel bad and leave us with a loss of fluid.

## Signs to look for dehydration:

- dry mouth and nose
- headache
- sunken eyes
- dry skin
- confusion
- constipation
- dark, amber color urine
- dizziness
- rapid heartbeat

## How much fluid should I drink?

Most people need 6-8 glasses of water a day. That is a 2-liter bottle. There are also other ways to get enough fluid.

## Try these ideas:

- take medications with a large glass of water
- eat popsicles, juice bars, or gelatin desserts
- eat soup before meals
- drink fruit or vegetable juice
- add juice, sauces or gravy to foods

***Eat Healthy Kentucky!***

**Kentucky River Foothills Development Council, Inc.**





*The Warning Signs of poor nutritional health are often overlooked. Use this checklist to find out if you or someone you know is at nutritional risk.*

# DETERMINE YOUR NUTRITIONAL HEALTH

Read the statements below. Circle the number in the yes column for those that apply to you or someone you know. For each yes answer, score the number in the box. Total your nutritional score.

|  | YES      |
|--|----------|
| I have an illness or condition that made me change the kind and/or amount of food I eat. | <b>2</b> |
| I eat fewer than 2 meals per day.  | <b>3</b> |
| I eat few fruits or vegetables, or milk products.  | <b>2</b> |
| I have 3 or more drinks of beer, liquor or wine almost every day.                        | <b>2</b> |
| I have tooth or mouth problems that make it hard for me to eat.                          | <b>2</b> |
| I don't always have enough money to buy the food I need.                                 | <b>4</b> |
| I eat alone most of the time.  | <b>1</b> |
| I take 3 or more different prescribed or over-the-counter drugs a day.                   | <b>1</b> |
| Without wanting to, I have lost or gained 10 pounds in the last 6 months.                | <b>2</b> |
| I am not always physically able to shop, cook and/or feed myself.                        | <b>2</b> |


TOTAL

## Total Your Nutritional Score. If it's

- 0-2**      **Good!** Recheck your nutritional score in 6 months.
- 3-5**      **You are at moderate nutritional risk.** See what can be done to improve your eating habits and lifestyle. Your office on aging, senior nutrition program, senior citizens center or health department can help. Recheck your nutritional score in 3 months.
- 6 or more**      **You are at high nutritional risk.** Bring this checklist the next time you see your doctor, dietitian or other qualified health or social service professional. Talk with them about any problems you may have. Ask for help to improve your nutritional health.

*These materials developed and distributed by the Nutrition Screening initiative, a project*

 AMERICAN ACADEMY OF FAMILY PHYSICIANS

 THE AMERICAN DIETETIC ASSOCIATION

NATIONAL COUNCIL, ON THE AGING ON THE AGING

**Remember that warning signs suggest risk, but do not represent diagnosis of any condition. Turn the page to learn more about the Warning Signs of poor nutritional health.**

The Nutrition Screening Initiative is funded in part by a grant from Ross Laboratories, a division of Abbott Laboratories.



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## **D**ISEASE

Any disease, illness or chronic condition which causes you to change the way you eat, or makes it hard for you to eat, puts your nutritional health at risk. Four out of five adults have chronic diseases that are affected by diet. Confusion or memory loss that keeps getting worse is estimated to affect one out of five or more of older adults. This can make it hard to remember what, when or if you've eaten. Feeling sad or depressed, which happens to about one in eight older adults, can cause big changes in appetite, digestion, energy level, weight and well-being.

## **E**ating Poorly

Eating too little and eating too much both lead to poor health. Eating the same foods day after day or not eating fruit, vegetables, and milk products daily will also cause poor nutritional health. One in five adults skip meals daily. Only 13% of adults eat the minimum amount of fruit and vegetables needed. One in four older adults drink too much alcohol. Many health problems become worse if you drink more than one or two alcoholic beverages per day.

## **T** OOTH LOSS/ MOUTH PAIN

A healthy mouth, teeth and gums are needed to eat. Missing, loose or rotten teeth or dentures which don't fit well or cause mouth sores make it hard to eat.

## **E**CONOMIC HARDSHIP

As many as 40% of older Americans have incomes of less than \$6,000 per year. Having less--or choosing to spend less--than \$2530 per week for food makes it very hard to get the foods you need to stay healthy.

## **R**EDUCED SOCIAL CONTACT

One-third of all older people live alone. Being with people daily has a positive effect on morale, well-being and eating.

## **M**ULTIPLE MEDICINES

Many older Americans must take medicines for health problems. Almost half of older Americans take multiple medicines daily. Growing old may change the way we respond to drugs. The more medicines you take, the greater the chance for side effects such as increased or decreased appetite, change in taste, constipation, weakness, drowsiness, diarrhea, nausea, and others. Vitamins or minerals when taken in large doses act like drugs and can cause harm. Alert your doctor to everything you take.

## **I** NVOLUNTARY WEIGHT LOSS/GAIN

Losing or gaining a lot of weight when you are not trying to do so is an important warning sign that must not be ignored. Being overweight or underweight also increases your chance of poor health.

## **N** EEDS ASSISTANCE IN SELF CARE

Although most older people are able to eat, one of every five have trouble walking, shopping, buying and cooking food, especially as they get older.

## **E** LDER YEARS ABOVE AGE 80

Most older people lead full and productive lives. But as age increases, risk of frailty and health problems increase. Checking your nutritional health regularly makes good sense.



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