

Improving Quality of Life

March is National Nutrition Month



A well balanced diet provides optimal nutrition to help delay the leading causes of death: heart disease, cancer, and stroke. With age

comes many physical changes. The following are some changes that effect nutritional status:

- 🍊 **Reduction in digestion and absorption**, which leads to pernicious anemia (deficiency in vitamin B12, affects 1/3 of older adults) and constipation.
- 🍊 **Progressive drop in bone mass** leading to increased risk for fractures and osteoporosis.
- 🍊 **Decrease in all the senses** particularly taste buds and sense of thirst.
- 🍊 **Cardiovascular changes:** the need for less sodium intake, which helps blood pressure.
- 🍊 **Lower immune function**, which leads to less ability to fight infections.
- 🍊 **Depression** leads to weight loss.
- 🍊 **Social isolation** related to health problems.

Tips to get the nutrition you need:

- 🍎 Eat small amounts more frequently
- 🍎 Limit fluids during meals, this can fill you up and limit your calorie intake.
- 🍎 Nutritional supplements, ie.Boost, Ensure, etc.

- 🍎 Increase calorie and protein intake during illness, treatment, and recovery.
- 🍎 Multivitamin

Drink **plenty of fluids** like water, juice, milk, and soup. You know you are getting enough if your urine is pale.

Eat **more fiber**, which is found in beans, nuts, brown rice, and whole grains. Fiber helps avoid constipation, diverticulosis, and may also lower cholesterol and blood sugar.

Monitor and **limit your salt and fat** intake. Try to eat more foods rich in potassium, i.e.; green leafy vegetables, tomatoes and bananas. This will counter the effects of salt on your blood pressure.

Always make sure to **fully cook** meats and eggs and **wash** fruits and vegetables.



National Institute on Aging
1-800-222-2225

www.nihseniorhealth.gov

Source: www.nutrition.gov, Age Page

www.nia.nih.gov

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