Healthy Aging in Neighborhoods of Diversity across the Life Span

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The Healthy Journey

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A great way to stay healthy is through diet and nutrition. What you eat affects your physical health, brain function, and bone health. What you choose to eat is important. In this newsletter, we hope to give you information with some examples to help you make healthy food choices. We will discuss how many calories you need to eat. There will be information on specific nutrients. We also included spots in the Baltimore community where fresh fruits and vegetables are available.

Calories. A calorie is a measure of energy from food and drinks. Daily calorie recommendations for older adults aged 60 and older is 1600-2200 for women and 2000-2600 for men. The calories you need in a day depend on your age, sex, height, weight, and activity level. That is why a range of calories is listed instead of a specific number.

Nutrition label. A nutrition label is required on most packaged food. The label is found on the side or back of food package. The label displays the number of calories and nutrients per serving. Note the serving size and servings per container may be different. Look at the sample nutrition label box of macaroni and cheese. 1 serving is measured as 1 cup. The servings per container (entire box) is 2 cups. This means if the box is eaten, the calories would double. The DV% (percent of daily value) also doubles. For meals at restaurants, calorie information may be found on the menu. For fast food meals information can be found on in-store menus or official websites and applications.

Sample label for Macaroni & Cheese

Nutrients. Protein, calcium, and vitamin D are a few. It is important for meals to be nutrient dense. This means foods are high in nutrients and fiber but low in calories. These super foods are lean meats and poultry (chicken and turkey), whole grains, fish and seafood, beans and legumes, and fruits and vegetables. For those following a vegetarian diet, soy and quinoa are two plant foods that have high protein quality.

Protein & muscle mass. Protein is a macronutrient needed to keep and build muscle. Macronutrients provide energy and are needed for many bodily functions. Muscle mass is a key factor in keeping your mobility and ability to live on your own as you age.

As you get older, your body composition can change. This is true even if you weigh the same. Muscle mass goes down while body fat goes up. Between the ages of 40 and 80, older adults can lose up to 50% of their muscle mass.

Studies have shown that older adults require more protein to stay healthy. The recommended protein intake for older adults is 1.2 to 2.0 g/kg/day. This protein intake should also be spaced out evenly between meals. For example, an older adult who weighs 150 pounds (68 kg) should eat between 82 and 136 grams of protein per day. That is about 20-30 grams of protein in each meal. For snacks, aim for 12-15 grams of protein.

Good sources of protein are meat, beans, and eggs. If following a vegetarian diet, soy and quinoa are two plant foods that have high protein quality, like meat. For

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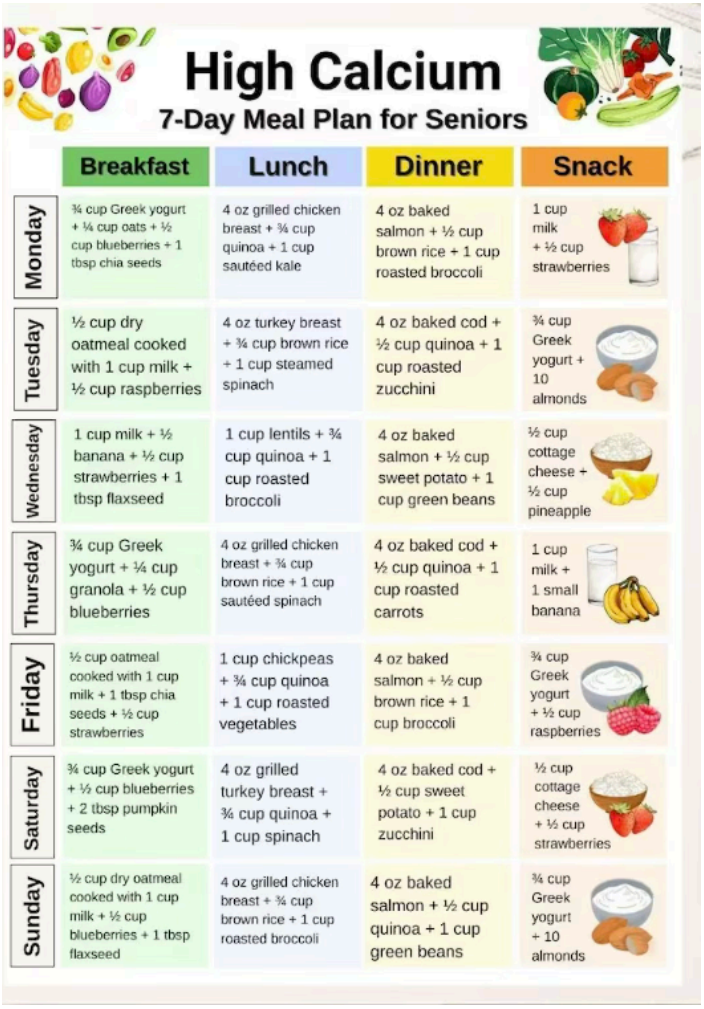
those with kidney disease, too much protein can worsen kidney function. In this instance, you should discuss this with your healthcare team and follow their recommendations.

Calcium. Calcium is found in dairy products (milk, cheese, and yogurt), leafy green vegetables (kale, spinach, collard greens, etc.), and fortified orange juice. It is also found in plant-based beverages (soy, almond milk). Calcium is important for bone health and to prevent osteoporosis. Women starting at age 51 should try to increase their calcium intake to 1200mg per day. Starting at age 70, men should increase their calcium intake to 1200mg per day. View the graphic for an example of a high calcium 7-Day meal plan. Calcium can be found on the nutrition label!



High Calcium

7-Day Meal Plan for Seniors

	Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner	Snack
Monday	¾ cup Greek yogurt + ¼ cup oats + ½ cup blueberries + 1 tbsp chia seeds	4 oz grilled chicken breast + ¾ cup quinoa + 1 cup sautéed kale	4 oz baked salmon + ½ cup brown rice + 1 cup roasted broccoli	1 cup milk + ½ cup strawberries
Tuesday	½ cup dry oatmeal cooked with 1 cup milk + ½ cup raspberries	4 oz turkey breast + ¾ cup brown rice + 1 cup steamed spinach	4 oz baked cod + ½ cup quinoa + 1 cup roasted zucchini	¾ cup Greek yogurt + 10 almonds
Wednesday	1 cup milk + ½ banana + ½ cup strawberries + 1 tbsp flaxseed	1 cup lentils + ¾ cup quinoa + 1 cup roasted broccoli	4 oz baked salmon + ½ cup sweet potato + 1 cup green beans	½ cup cottage cheese + ½ cup pineapple
Thursday	¾ cup Greek yogurt + ¼ cup granola + ½ cup blueberries	4 oz grilled chicken breast + ¾ cup brown rice + 1 cup sautéed spinach	4 oz baked cod + ½ cup quinoa + 1 cup roasted carrots	1 cup milk + 1 small banana
Friday	½ cup oatmeal cooked with 1 cup milk + 1 tbsp chia seeds + ½ cup strawberries	1 cup chickpeas + ¾ cup quinoa + 1 cup roasted vegetables	4 oz baked salmon + ½ cup brown rice + 1 cup broccoli	¾ cup Greek yogurt + ½ cup raspberries
Saturday	¾ cup Greek yogurt + ½ cup blueberries + 2 tbsp pumpkin seeds	4 oz grilled turkey breast + ¾ cup quinoa + 1 cup spinach	4 oz baked cod + ½ cup sweet potato + 1 cup zucchini	½ cup cottage cheese + ½ cup strawberries
Sunday	½ cup dry oatmeal cooked with 1 cup milk + ½ cup blueberries + 1 tbsp flaxseed	4 oz grilled chicken breast + ¾ cup brown rice + 1 cup roasted broccoli	4 oz baked salmon + ½ cup quinoa + 1 cup green beans	¾ cup Greek yogurt + 10 almonds

Vitamin D. Vitamin D helps keep your bones strong as you age. Vitamin D is found in fatty fish (trout, salmon, tuna, etc.) and fortified food products like milk, cereals, and orange juice. Vitamin D is the sunshine vitamin. Our skin can absorb it just by going outside. This helps you get Vitamin D in addition to what you eat. If your vitamin D levels are low, your doctor may put you on a vitamin D supplement.

Canned sardines in oil or water with bones are a cheap, nutrient dense food to meet daily calcium goals. A single 3.75 ounce (oz) can with bones provides 350-380 mg of calcium. Sardines also contain Vitamin D, omega-3 fats, and protein!

Food Sources of Fiber[4]

Food source	Amount per serving	Grams per serving
Chickpeas	0.5 cup	11
Black beans	0.5 cup	7
Almonds	0.3 cup	6
Quinoa (cooked)	1 cup	5
Broccoli	1 cup	5
Oatmeal (cooked)	1 cup	4
Apple	1 medium	4
Banana	1 medium	3
Whole wheat bread	1 slice	2
Brown rice	0.5 cup	2
Cabbage (raw)	1 cup	2
Shelled pumpkin seeds	1 ounce	2

Fiber. Fiber helps with feeling full and preventing constipation. Increase fiber intake slowly. Too much fiber too soon can cause bloating, gas, and cramping. Fiber improves heart health and helps your gut stay healthy. When shopping, review the nutrition label. Recommended grams per day are shown in the table by age for men and women,. Some example food sources and serving sizes are shown below.

Adequate Intake (AI) for Fiber[4]:

Life Stage Group	Men	Women
31-50 years	38 grams	25 grams
51-70 years	30 grams	21 grams
71+ years	30 grams	21 grams

Water. Everyone needs water for good health. We experience dehydration when fluid loss is more than we have consumed. Older people are more prone to dehydration than younger people. Also, you may be less thirsty as you get older. Medications may increase your risk of dehydration. Problems with urination may cause people to drink less to prevent accidents or disruptions in sleep. An easy way to tell if you are dehydrated is to look at your urine. Urine should be a pale-yellow color. If your urine is dark or amber colored, then you're not drinking enough fluids. The lighter the color, the more hydrated you are. Try to drink about ⅓ of your body weight in ounces of fluids. For example, if you weigh 150 pounds, you should drink at least 50 oz or 6-7 cups of water daily. Some tips to stay hydrated are below:

- Always keep a water bottle with you. That makes it easy to drink water throughout the day.

- Eat foods with high-water content. These foods include soups and stews. Fruits and vegetables like watermelon, cucumbers, strawberries, lettuce, and tomatoes.
- Add flavor to your water with fruits or water flavoring pouches (Liquid IV, Crystal Light, etc.). Water goals can also be met through low-sugar drinks or nutritional shakes.
- Drink a glass of water when you wake up and with every meal.

Omega-3s. Omega-3s are fatty acids essential for improving overall health. They improve brain, heart, and health of your eyes. Omega-3s alleviate arthritis and inflammation. Omega-3s help improve sleep and reduce anxiety and depression. Fish oil is a supplement that helps meet the daily intake. For adults ages 51+ the recommended daily goal is 1.6 grams for men and 1.1 grams for women. View the picture for examples of food to help meet daily goals.

Balanced and healthy diet. Keeping a balanced and healthy diet keeps you in good health. We also want to touch on the importance of staying active. Strength and resistance exercises like weightlifting and body weight exercises (squats and lunges) go a long way. Cardio exercises are also great such as walking and swimming. A combination of these exercises is best for keeping healthy heart and body strength.

We know it is easier said than done following these diet recommendations. A good rule of thumb is to increase your intake of whole grains, fruits and vegetables, lean meat and protein sources. Decrease the number of processed foods in your diet.

Recommendations. To help you obtain these healthy diet goals, we wanted to include some resources that can help you get healthy foods to eat.

Pratt Free Market is a FREE grocery store found at the Southeast Anchor Library. Each customer can fill 1 library-supplied bag with fresh produce and food per day. Free tickets are at the library in the morning of open market days. The market is open on every 3rd Wednesday of the month from 11:00 am-2:00 pm and on Fridays (except for the 4th Friday of the month) it is open from 2:00 pm-5:00 pm. More information is at https://www.prattlibrary.org/about-us/diversity-equity-inclusion/dei-projects/pratt-free-market.

Beans and Bread is a resource program that offers free meals. Breakfast is served every weekday (Monday-Friday) from 9:00 am to 10:00 am. Lunch is 11:00 am – 1:00 pm. The program is on 400 S. Bond Street. More information is at https://www.vincentbaltimore.org/what-we-do/homelessness/beans-and-bread/.

Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program provides low-income adults (aged 60+) with coupons that can are used to buy fresh produce from farmers markets. For information on how to apply go to https://www.fns.usda.gov/sfmnp/senior-farmers-market-nutrition-program.

If you need help with finding food resources, please contact 211 Maryland by dialing 211 or visiting 211md.org. Healthy recipes can be found at https://medlineplus.gov/recipes/ and https://foodhero.org/.

Referral guide

The HANDLS Referral Guide has numerous resources in Baltimore City including health care, mental health, substance abuse services, social services, vision and dental discounts and programs, pharmacy assistance and more! To access our HANDLS Referral Guide go to https://handls.nih.gov/ReferralGuide-2023-05-26.pdf.

Contacting HANDLS

If you'd like to be added to the HANDLS email list, please message us at handls@mail.nih.gov.

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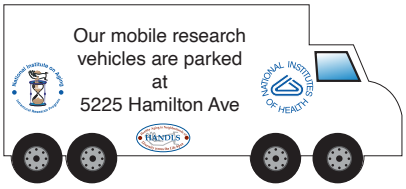

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Newsletter for the HANDLS community

The purpose of this study is to learn about changes in health over time. Using our medical research vehicles, we want to study as many people with different backgrounds as we can. We want this study to help us understand healthy aging by examining the influences of different backgrounds on changes in health over time. The information we gather will help improve health and prevent disabilities. Our goal is to gather information to improve health and prevent disabilities for people of all backgrounds, particularly in minority communities and communities with limited resources.

For information about our study call 877-677-9538 or visit our website https://handls.nih.gov.