



**March is National Nutrition & Colorectal Cancer Month**

**HEALTHY EATING TIPS FOR SENIORS**

Healthy eating begins with you! Giving your body the right nutrients and maintaining a healthy weight can help you stay active and independent. You'll also spend less time and money at the doctor. This is especially true if you have a chronic condition, such as diabetes or heart disease.

The definition of healthy eating does change a little as you age. For example, as you grow older, your metabolism slows down, so you need fewer calories than before. Your body also needs more of certain nutrients. That means it's more important than ever to choose foods that give you the best nutritional value.

**TIPS FOR PICKING HEALTHY FOOD AS YOU GET OLDER**

1. **Know what a healthy plate looks like.** You might remember the food pyramid, but the USDA recently unveiled a simpler way to help people see what they should eat each day. It's called **MyPlate**. The simple graphic shows exactly how the five food groups should stack up on your plate. These are the building blocks for a healthy diet.
2. **Look for important nutrients.** Make sure you eat a variety of foods to get all the nutrients you need. Your plate should look like a rainbow- bright, colored foods are always the best choice! A healthy meal should include.

- Lean protein (lean meats, seafood ,eggs, beans)
  - Fruits and vegetables (think orange, red, green, and purple)
  - Whole grains- brown rice, whole wheat pasta)
  - Low-fat dairy (milk and its alternatives) Remember to choose foods that are high in fiber and low in sodium or salt. Also look for Vitamin D, an important mineral as we age.
3. **Read the nutrition facts label** The healthiest foods are whole foods. These are often found on the perimeter of the grocery store in the produce, meat and dairy sections. When you do eat packaged foods, be a smart shopper! Read the labels to find items that are

lower in fat, added sugars, and sodium.

4. **Use recommended servings-**

To maintain your weight, you must eat the right amount of food for your age and body.

**The American Heart**

**Association** provides

recommended daily servings for adults aged 60 +.

5. **Stay hydrated -** Water is

an important nutrient too!

Don't let yourself get

dehydrated- drink small

amounts of fluids consistently throughout the day. Tea,

coffee, and water are your

best choices. Keep fluids with

sugar and salt at a minimum,

unless your doctor has

suggested otherwise.

6. **Stretch your food budget-**

Want to get the biggest

nutritional bang for your

buck? The Supplemental

Nutrition Assistance Program

(SNAP) can help you afford

healthy food when you need

it. Over 4 million older

Americans use SNAP to buy

food, and the average senior

receives \$113 each month.

Visit

[BenefitsCheckUp.org/getSN](https://www.benefitscheckup.org/getSNAP)

[AP](https://www.benefitscheckup.org/getSNAP) to see if the program can

help you.



**Among cancers that effect both men and women, colorectal cancer**

**(cancer of the colon or rectum) is the second leading cause of cancer deaths in the United States.** Every

year about 140,000 Americans are

diagnosed with colorectal cancer,

and more than 50,000 people die

from it. But this disease is highly

preventable, by getting screened

beginning at age 50.

Screening tests help prevent

colorectal cancer by finding

precancerous polyps (abnormal

growths) so they can be removed.

Screening also finds this cancer

early, when treatment can be most

effective.

**What you can do**

- If you're aged 50-75 get screened for colorectal cancer regularly. If you're between 76-85, ask your doctor.
- Be physically active
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Don't drink too much alcohol
- Don't smoke

**Fast Facts**

- Risk increases with age. More than 90% of colorectal cancers occur in people aged 50 and older.
- Precancerous polyps and colorectal cancer don't always cause symptoms, especially at first. You could have polyps and colorectal cancer and not know it. That is why screening tests are so important. If you have symptoms, they may include

\* Blood in or on the stool (bowel movement)

\*Stomach pain, aches, or cramps that do not go

away.\* Losing weight and

you don't know why. These

symptoms may be caused by

something other than

cancer. If you have any of

them, see your doctor.

- Some people are at a higher risk than others for developing colorectal cancer. If you think you might be at increased risk, talk to your doctor about when to begin screening.
- There are several screening test options. Talk with your doctor about which is best for you.

**COLORECTAL CANCER  
SCREENING SAVES LIVES! GET  
SCREENED!**

