



Nutrition

for seniors



As you age, your body will benefit from eating a balanced diet. You may have special concerns, such as constipation, frail bones, chewing problems or eating on a limited income. This booklet helps you make healthy eating choices while meeting some of the special concerns of growing older.

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ARE YOU TAKING VITAMIN/MINERAL SUPPLEMENTS?

Choose a vitamin/mineral supplement that contains a range of vitamins and minerals, but does not have more than 100% of the recommended daily allowances (RDA) for each vitamin or mineral. Store or generic brands are usually the best buys.

A vitamin/mineral pill can supplement your diet, but it cannot replace good eating habits.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO DO IT ALONE

As a Kaiser Permanente member, there are many resources available to help you get started. We offer programs to help you:

- manage your diabetes or blood pressure
- reduce the fat in the foods you eat
- increase your physical activity

Contact your local Health Education Department for videos, pamphlets, books and information on classes and programs. Your Kaiser Permanente *Healthwise Handbook* also contains helpful information on cholesterol, nutrition and exercise. For medical advice, contact your doctor, nurse practitioner or advice nurse.

- Make a shopping list and stick to it.
- Shop when your store is least crowded so you can relax and have time to look for the best values.
- Buy store brands or generic brands.
- Shop at discount stores and share large purchases with others.
- You may be able to get food stamps. For further information on food stamps, call your local Department of Social Services.

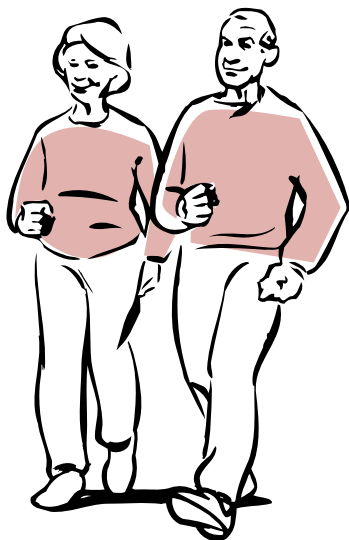
ARE YOU EXERCISING ON MOST DAYS?

Exercise plays a role in good health. Regular exercise helps keep your body working properly. It can also decrease constipation, increase your appetite, improve sleep and help with stress.

Start with even 10 minutes of daily activity. Work up to at least 30 minutes of exercise on most days. Try:

- walking
- swimming
- dancing

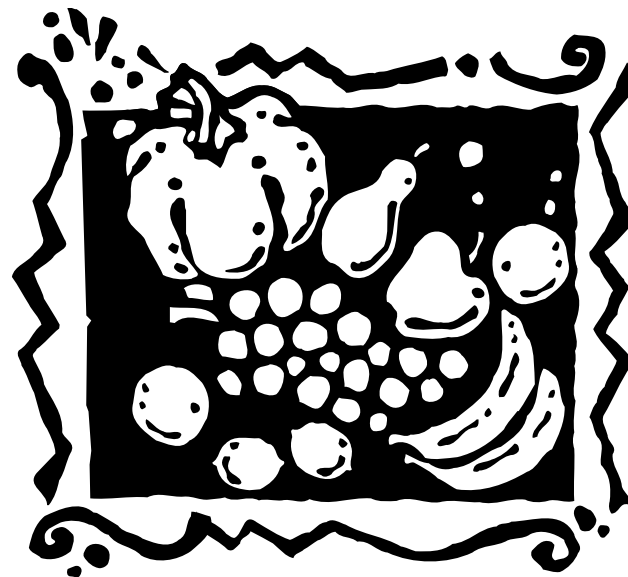
Slow down and rest if you feel tired or short of breath.



Eat A Variety of Foods

The Daily Food Guide in the center of this booklet shows the food groups and the recommended number of servings to eat daily. You can use this as a guide when planning your meals.

Keep in mind that careful food selections and variety are the keys to your good health.



Choose High fiber foods



Fiber helps relieve constipation because it holds water. It softens your stool so you can pass it more easily.

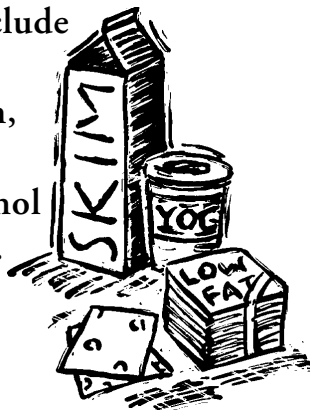
Fiber (you may have heard it called “roughage”) refers to the part of plant foods that you can’t digest. Whole grain breads and cereals, raw and cooked fruits and vegetables are good sources of fiber.

When you add fiber to your diet, it is important to add it slowly over a few weeks or months and drink more liquids.

Drink Plenty of liquids

Liquids help your digestion and decrease constipation. They also help your kidneys function better.

Drink at least 6-8 glasses daily. Include 2-3 glasses of water. You can also drink juices, milk, soup, and broth, or decaffeinated coffee, tea, and soda. Drinks with caffeine or alcohol don’t count toward the 6-8 glasses.



Select Calcium-Rich foods

Calcium is important for good health and strong bones.

The best sources of calcium are dairy products.

are you Tired of Eating Alone?

Eating alone may cause you to skip meals, eat the same thing all the time, or not eat enough. Try these ideas to make your meal times special:

- Set an attractive table
- Eat by a window
- Listen to the radio
- Eat outdoors on a nice day
- Dine out every now and then
- Share a meal with a friend, family member or group
- Go to senior meal programs in your community



are you On A limited Income?

If stretching the budget is a concern for you, here are some tips for getting the best value for your dollar at the grocery store:

- Plan menus for a week or more. Look for weekly specials in your local newspaper.
- Cut out and save coupons.
- Organize your coupons. Use coupons on food items that are already on sale.



Eat Regular Meals

Skipping meals can reduce your nutritional intake, weaken your body's defenses and increase your chance of illness.

It doesn't matter if you eat two to three large meals or if you eat smaller, more frequent meals, as long as you eat a variety of foods providing the nutrients you need each day.

do you have Chewing Problems?

If you have tooth or mouth problems that make it hard for you to eat, try some of the following foods:

- Soft, protein-rich foods such as fish, low fat yogurt, cottage cheese, tofu, eggs and baked beans
- Casseroles made with ground or finely chopped meat, poultry, fish, or grated low fat cheese
- Finely chopped or mashed vegetables
- Chopped or pureed vegetables in soups
- Cooked cereals, such as oatmeal
- Canned or cooked fruit, or very ripe fresh fruit, such as bananas or peaches

Canned fish with soft, edible bones and green leafy vegetables also have calcium.

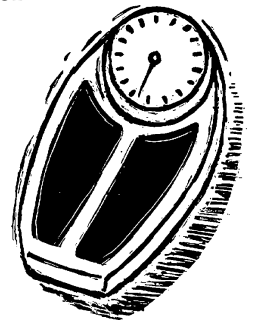
To eat more dairy products, use low fat or nonfat milk instead of water whenever possible in your cooking.

If you do not digest milk easily and have cramping, bloating or diarrhea when you drink milk, try drinking smaller amounts of milk spaced throughout the day. You may find it easier to digest cultured dairy products such as yogurt, buttermilk, and cheese, or milk treated with lactase.

Reduce fat in your diet

Eating less fat helps you control your weight and is healthier for your heart. Here are some ways to limit fat:

- Eat nonfat or low fat foods.
- Choose lean meat and trim off visible fat.
- Bake, broil, roast or steam foods rather than fry.
- Remove skin from chicken and turkey before you eat it.
- Use less butter, margarine, cream, sour cream, cream cheese, and high fat salad dressing.
- Try low fat frozen desserts like sherbet or low fat frozen yogurt instead of ice cream.



A Daily Food Guide

Food Group (Key Nutrients Supplied)	Recommended Daily Servings	Example of 1 Serving	Tips for Healthy Food Selections
Bread, Cereal, Rice & Pasta (B vitamins, Iron, Fiber)	6-11	1 slice bread or 1 tortilla 1/2 cup hot cereal 3/4 cup dry cereal 1/2 cup cooked rice, noodles, or pasta	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose whole grain products. • Avoid cereals high in sugar.
Fruits (Fiber, Vitamin C, Vitamin A)	2-4	1/2 cantaloupe 3/4 cup fruit juice 1 medium apple 1 medium banana 1/2 cup chopped, cooked, or canned fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose fruits packed in fruit juice or water. • Choose a food high in Vitamin C daily (such as oranges, tomato juice, or cantaloupe).
Vegetables (Fiber, Vitamin C, Vitamin A)	3-5	1 cup raw vegetables 1/2 cup cooked vegetables 3/4 cup vegetable juice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid vegetables in rich cream or cheese sauces. • Choose dark green or yellow vegetables (such as carrots, spinach, or broccoli) as a Vitamin A source daily.
Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs & Nuts (Protein, Iron, B Vitamins)	2-3	2 oz. lean meat, fish, or poultry 1 egg 1/2 cup tuna 1/4 cup peanut butter 1/2 cup nuts or seeds 1/2 cup cooked dry beans	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Most bacon, hot dogs, and luncheon meats are high in calories, fat, and salt. Look for the low fat varieties. • Choose fish and beans more often in place of meat.
Milk, Yogurt & Cheese (Calcium, Vitamin A, Vitamin D)	2-3	1 cup low fat milk 1-1/2 oz. cheese 1 cup plain yogurt 1/2 cup cottage cheese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Choose nonfat or low fat dairy products.

Other Foods: Some foods, such as cake, cookies, butter, oil, jelly and alcohol are high in calories and contain no nutrients or are low in most nutrients. Eat less of these foods.

The information presented here is not intended to diagnose health problems or to take the place of professional medical care. If you have persistent health problems or if you have further questions, please consult your health care provider.