

Meal Components & Nutrient Needs for Older Adults

Eating right and staying fit are important at any age. As we age our bodies have different needs, so certain nutrients become especially important for good health.

Calcium & Vitamin D- Important for maintaining bone health. Calcium is found in milk, fortified cereals and plant beverages, dark green leafy vegetables, and canned fish with soft bones. Sources of vitamin D are the sun, fatty fish, mushrooms, egg yolks, and fortified in products like milk and orange juice.

Potassium- Helps manage blood pressure. Dark green leafy veggies, squash, tomatoes, bananas, potatoes, beans, & avocados are rich in this.

Magnesium- Helps with muscle and nerve function, controlling blood sugars and regulating blood pressure. Foods rich in this are dark green leafy vegetables, beans, fish, nuts, seeds, whole grains, yogurt, and dried fruit.

Vitamin B12- Very important for people over 50. Fortified cereal, lean meat, fish, & seafood are good sources.

Folate- Important for making red blood cells & DNA. Dark green leafy veggies, beans & citrus are rich in this.

Protein- Very important to maintain muscle mass, strength, & promotes wound healing. Lean meats, poultry, fish, and eggs are a great source as well as beans, lentils, nuts & quinoa.

Dietary Fiber- May help lower cholesterol, control blood sugars, & important for bowel function. Fruits, vegetables & whole grains all contain dietary fiber.

Sodium- Sodium has a direct correlation with high blood pressure and lower sodium may help reduce the risk of heart disease. Choose fresh foods or lower sodium canned & frozen foods.

Meal Component Guidelines for The Senior Nutrition Program

Needed daily:

Grains- 1 serving (half of all grains are whole)

Fruits & Vegetables- 3 servings

Protein foods- 3 oz.

Fluid Milk- 1 serving

Fats & Oils- 1 serving

Needed Weekly:

Dark Green Vegetables- 1 serving

Red/Orange Vegetables- 2 servings

Beans/Peas- 1 serving

Starchy Vegetables- 2 servings

Other Vegetables- As Desired

Nutrition Standards for Average Weekly Menu	Minimum Requirements Per day
Calories	600-800
Protein	25g
Carbohydrates	44g
Dietary Fiber	8g
Saturated Fat	<10% calories
Calcium	400mg
Potassium	1300mg
Sodium	1100mg max
Magnesium	110mg
Vitamin B12	0.8mcg
Vitamin C	30mg
Vitamin D	120 IU
Folate/Folic Acid	135mcg

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