

# NEWSLETTER

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## HEALTH: FOOD & NUTRITION

EATING RIGHT AND STAYING ACTIVE ARE IMPORTANT NO MATTER WHAT YOUR AGE.

AS WE GET OLDER OUR BODIES HAVE DIFFERENT NEEDS. THE FOODS, NUTRIENTS AND EVEN THE MICRONUTRIENTS THAT WE MAY NOT HAVE THOUGHT ABOUT BECOME VERY IMPORTANT.

- To improve and maintain your body's functions as you age, nutrition care and having a good routine are important
- Making positive choices about what we consume not only impacts our immediate health but also increases the potential for a more optimal longevity span

### KEY INFORMATION

- Healthy eating habits can improve your energy levels, boost your immune system - good food choices may help you prevent or manage diseases and other physical conditions
- In seniors, thirst sensations often become weaker, so make a conscious effort to consume the amount of fluids your doctor recommends
- Needing fewer calories does not necessarily mean needing fewer nutrients



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### TOPICS COVERED IN THIS CHALENJ

- Nutrition
- Eating the rainbow, eating well
- Healthy diet
- Risk of undernutrition
- Nutrition challenges
- Health and nutrition resources



# NUTRITION

Food may not seem important when it comes to your immediate health needs, but it is imperative to focus on quality over quantity as well.

Nutrition needs vary throughout the stages of longevity. The foods and drinks that make up a healthy diet may be slightly different from when you were younger.

It is important to eat a variety of healthy foods to be sure you are getting enough of the different nutrients you need.

**Eat the Rainbow!!**



**Watch this video to learn more about the role of nutrition in healthy aging.....**

According to the Kresser Institute by preventing deficiency of vitamins C, D, B12, magnesium, choline and folate you may be increasing your chances of preventing some common chronic conditions such as:

- damaged liver function
- cognitive dysfunction
- damages blood vessels
- altered gene expression
- increased risk of cancer
- inconsistent blood pressure
- metabolic syndrome
- cardiovascular disease
- depression

It has been discovered that the colour of whole foods indicates the specific nutrients they contain.

The colours of fruits and vegetables are a result of specific phytonutrients – natural chemicals that help protect plants from germs, bugs, the sun's harmful rays, and other threats.

Greens are one of healthiest foods we can eat. Green fruits and vegetables are rich in lutein, isothiocyanates, isoflavones, and vitamin K; all which are essential for blood and bone health. Green vegetables are also rich in folates, which are vital for a healthy nervous system.

Research is constantly being conducted showing the involvement of folates in the ageing brain, especially in mood and cognitive function.

The Community Training and Development Centre suggest the following in their Keeping Seniors Healthy at Home Food downloadable guide on page 12:

1. Rainbow shopping challenge: Try to find fruits/vegetables that will complete the rainbow.
2. Make a rainbow meal: Create a meal that uses every color of the rainbow – red, orange, yellow, green, blue, purple, white, and even brown (think mushrooms).



**Click on this link to learn more about the food rainbow...**

[https://app.chalenj.com/storage/app/public/public/tasks/1055\\_1671200261-Eat\\_More\\_Colour.pdf](https://app.chalenj.com/storage/app/public/public/tasks/1055_1671200261-Eat_More_Colour.pdf)



**Click on this link to access the full guide: Keeping Seniors Healthy at Home...**

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Eat a variety of healthy foods each day

Have plenty  
of vegetables  
and fruitsEat protein  
foodsMake water  
your drink  
of choiceChoose  
whole grain  
foods

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## HEALTHY DIET

When we talk about diet, we are talking about the quantity and quality of the foods. A healthy diet is not about strict limitations or depriving yourself of the foods you love. Rather, it's about feeling great, having more energy, improving your health, and boosting your mood.

Eating well is not just about the foods you consume, but also the behaviours you have around eating.

It is important to establish a positive relationship with food to encourage healthy eating habits. Healthy eating is more than the foods you eat. It is also about where, when, and why and how you eat.

### The Canada Food Guide recommends strategies to set yourself up for success:

- Organize your fridge and pantry to make it easy to grab healthy foods
- Keep foods that can be used in a variety of meals and snacks available in accessible places
- Have a set place where you can eat and enjoy meals

## EATING WELL

The Healthy Eating for Seniors was originally developed in 2008 by the BC Ministry of Health and updated in 2017.

Click on the link below  
to read the full  
handbook.

[The Healthy Eating for Seniors](#)

- Mostly plant-based foods: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, legumes, and nuts
- Olive oil instead of butter
- Herbs and spices instead of salt
- Red meat a few times a month or less
- Fish and poultry at least twice a week
- Low consumption of red wine; or abstinence
- Minimal use of processed foods
- Reduce commercial baked goods and sweets, dairy desserts
- Meals enjoyed with family and friends

Healthy Ageing  
and Geriatrics

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## THOUGHTS TO CONSIDER

Do you eat only when hungry?

Do you eat out of boredom?

Do you eat because of emotions?

Are you distracted when you eat?

Which foods would you like to always have on hand and make permanent items on your grocery list?

# RISK OF UNDERNUTRITION

Undernutrition (malnutrition) occurs when there is a lack of nutrients in your diet which may lead to a variety of health issues. Undernutrition may result in unintentional weight loss, weakness or dizziness, and depression. Even though you may not need to eat the same amount of foods (calories) as you once did, it is important to eat the right foods.

One of the best ways to get the vitamins and minerals you need is by eating a wide variety of healthy foods that are nutrient dense.

## What does “Nutrient Dense” mean?

- Foods that have a lot of vitamins, minerals or other important nutrients and few calories are considered nutrient dense.
- Choosing foods that are nutrient dense are better for your overall health.

Some of the most nutrient dense foods are yogurt, eggs, lentils, broccoli, and black beans.



Malnutrition is a factor that increases the risk of frailty; a medical condition of reduced function and health in older individuals.

People who regularly eat alone are often at a higher risk for a variety of health issues, including malnutrition. With a little planning and the use of technology even people that live alone do not need to eat alone.

One suggestion to help avoid malnutrition is to eat at specific times throughout the day. Considering your current daily routine, what time will work best to eat breakfast, lunch, and dinner? How about snacking?

Make a weekly mealtime schedule and post it somewhere visible. Be sure to include the foods you will be eating and at which times.

## A few food suggestions containing 13 essential

### vitamins:

#### The Omnivore (meat/animal products)

meat (especially liver)  
fish (especially salmon)  
dark leafy green vegetables  
milk  
nuts  
whole grains

#### The Lactose Intolerant (avoiding dairy)

meat (especially liver)  
fish (especially salmon)  
sweet potatoes  
soy proteins  
dark leafy greens  
nuts  
whole grains

#### The Vegan (animal-free diet)

Dark leafy greens  
Broccoli  
Nuts  
Seeds  
sunlight (vitamin D)  
sweet potatoes  
grapefruits  
soy products

## NUTRITION CHALLENGES

More than 33% of Canadians over age 65 are at risk for poor nutrition which then increases the risk of early mortality and hospitalization.

### There are many challenges to maintaining good nutrition:

- low appetite
- poor sense of smell or taste
- medications interfere with digestion and nutrition
- mobility issues make shopping and meal preparation hard
- financial issues—less money for food
- loneliness and grief
- illness or disease

Set a daily reoccurring time for meals.

Set reasonable limits for the start and end of a mealtime.

Set specific mealtimes by writing them on the calendar.