

COSCO SENIORS' HEALTH AND WELLNESS INSTITUTE



HEALTHY EATING FOR SENIORS

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HEALTHY EATING IS IMPORTANT BECAUSE AS WE AGE . . .

- arteries get “clogged” and the heart works harder
- we need fewer calories
- we may lose muscle and gain fat
- we feel less thirsty so don't drink as much water as we need
- we suffer diminished taste and smell so food is less interesting so we may end up adding salt and sugar to “up” the taste

GOOD NEWS!

These basic changes can be prevented or minimized through healthy eating and living habits

- be physically active
- control your weight
- decrease salt and sugar intake
- get the right amounts of vitamins and minerals
- know the warning signs for diseases like diabetes, cancer, and heart disease
- monitor your blood pressure

CANADA FOOD GUIDE RECOMMENDATIONS FOR 4 FOOD GROUPS FOR THOSE 50 AND OVER

Number of servings/day	Men	Women
Vegetables and fruit	7	7
Grain Products	7	6
Milk and Alternatives	3	3
Meat and Alternatives	3	2

PORTION SIZES

- think of a portion size for meat as a **deck of cards** or the **palm of the hand**
- two thumbs' width is 1.5 oz of cheese

CHOLESTEROL

- is a natural waxy substance found in red meat, egg yolk, prawns, and high-fat dairy products
- is produced within the body so extra from food (dietary cholesterol) is not needed in high amounts. Aim for less than 200 mg daily

Two kinds of cholesterol from food

- **Healthy** – high-density lipoprotein **HDL**
 - **lowers the bad cholesterol levels**
 - **monounsaturated fats** found in nuts, seeds, avocados, and olive and canola oil
 - **polyunsaturated fats** found in safflower, corn, and soybean oils
 - **Omega 3 Fatty Acids** found in sardines, wild salmon, flax seeds, and walnuts
- **Unhealthy** – low-density lipoprotein **LDL**
 - **raises the bad cholesterol levels**
 - **saturated fats** found in fatty meats, whole milk, cream, cheese, butter, and palm and corn oil
 - **trans fats** found in potato chips, cookies, donuts, and deep-fried food



TIPS FOR LOWERING CHOLESTEROL

- reduce all fats but especially **saturated** and **trans fats**
- limit consumption of egg yolks and organ meats (e.g. liver)
- increase your consumption of fibre

SHOPPING TIPS

- **read labels:** look for sodium and sugar levels – compare brands
- **choose colourful fruits and vegetables:** dark green, red, yellow, purple, & orange
- **buy meat alternatives:** beans, lentils, tofu. Celebrate “Meatless Mondays”!
- **buy fish** for two meals per week
- **use a list, shop in the outer aisles**
- **save money:** shop on Seniors’ or Customer Appreciation Days; buy store brands
- **look for the Heart and Stroke Foundation Health Check**



HEALTHY EATING TIPS

- **don't skip meals**, especially breakfast
- **prepare healthy snacks** in advance in pre-sized portions (e.g. 12 almonds or washed vegetable sticks in a small bag or a boiled egg)
- **use a smaller plate** for portion control
- **sprinkle** your food with healthy additions such as flax seeds, hemp hearts, or walnuts
- **love your left overs** (e.g. add pasta to soup, cooked veggies in an omelette or meat to beans)
- **replace salt** with herbs, spices, ginger, garlic, or dry mustard
- **cut fat or sugar** in recipes by 1/3 (usually makes no difference to end product)
- **avoid processed foods**

DINING OUT TIPS

- **share a meal** with a dining partner
- **avoid buffets**
- **request a “to go” box** with the meal and pack up excess food before you eat
- **skip bread and deep-fried appetizers;** instead, choose a salad with low-fat dressing or vegetable soup
- **order gravies or sauces on the side**
- **ask for substitutes:** double veggies and no fries
- **drink ice water** with a slice of lemon
- **share dessert** (or have a cup of tea first and you might not want dessert)

MAKE A HEALTHY PROMISE TO YOURSELF

- each week, **try a new healthy food** (such as a grain, fruit, or vegetable)
- **choose whole grain bread** for your sandwich
- **drink one more glass of water** each day (check with your doctor if you have a heart condition)
- **eat one more vegetable and one more fruit** per day
- take **Vitamin D** (check with your doctor first)
- **eat fish** at least once a week
- **grill, steam, bake, microwave, roast** – don't fry

Canada's Food Guide www.hc-sc.gc.ca

8-1-1: HealthLink BC provides access to a dietician, a registered nurse, and/or a pharmacist www.healthlinkbc.ca

2-1-1: for information about community services in Metro Vancouver, Fraser Valley, Squamish/Lillooet www.bc211.ca