Nutrition Times

South Zone Healthy Eating Newsletter

Nutrition & Falls Prevention

The risk of falls can increase as we get older. Healthy eating can help keep your body strong, so that you can stay active and independent!

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Protein and muscles

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Your muscles are important for strength and balance. It's natural to lose muscle mass as we age, however, losing too much muscle can make movement and daily activities more difficult. This can increase your risk of falls.

Protein is important for building muscles and repairing tissues. Keeping your muscles strong can help with balance, walking, climbing stairs and getting up from a chair.

Add a variety of protein foods to your meals:

Plant-based	Dairy & Milk alternatives	Animal-based
• Beans • Chickpeas • Lentils • Tofu • Cashews • Nut butters (e.g. peanut, almond)	• Cheese • Yogurt • Milk • Kefir • Fortified soy beverage	• Eggs • Lean cuts of beef, pork, goat, lamb, bison • Poultry • Seafood • Wild game

Tips for getting more protein

- **Eat protein with every meal.** Spread protein throughout the day rather than having it in only one meal.
- **Balance snacks with protein.** Try dipping veggies in hummus or Greek yogurt with some fruit.

Calcium, vitamin D and bone health

Calcium and vitamin D work together to build bones and keep them strong.

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If you don't get enough of these nutrients throughout life, you have an increased chance of having thin and brittle bones (osteoporosis) in your later years. This can increase your risk of serious injuries if you fall.

Tips for getting more calcium and vitamin D

- Foods like cheese, yogurt, kefir, canned salmon and leafy green vegetables have calcium. Some foods like fatty fish or dairy products may also have vitamin D, which can help your body absorb calcium.
- Have a glass of milk or fortified plant beverage with meals. This helps you stay hydrated while providing nutrients.
- Ask your healthcare provider if taking a calcium or vitamin D supplement can help you meet your needs.

Prepared monthly by Alberta Health Services South Zone Dietitians, Nutrition Services

Staying hydrated

Remember to drink fluids regularly! Water helps move nutrients and waste through your body, manage your blood pressure and cushion your joints and organs. Dehydration may lead to confusion, dizziness, muscle weakness and falls.

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Tips for drinking more fluids

- Don't wait until you feel thirsty to drink water! By the time you feel thirsty you are already dehydrated.
- Bring a reusable water bottle when going out for a walk, errands and other activities.
- Take medications with a full glass of water.
- Keep a jug of water in the fridge or on the dining table as a reminder.

Try these healthy recipes for your next meal!

- Salmon cakes with lemon yogurt sauce
- Good morning egg roll-up
- Fruit and yogurt granola parfaits

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Additional Resources

- Canada's Food Guide
- Am I Eating Well for My Bones?
- Free Food in Alberta | Alberta Health Services
- Nutrition Check-up for Older Adults
  Answer questions about your eating habits and get a personalized nutrition report.

Upcoming Events, Classes and Other Resources

We offer workshops to support your health and wellbeing, including sessions focused on preventing or managing chronic disease. For a complete list of workshops that are available anywhere in the province, click here.

Check out many other resources at the Nutrition for Older Adults webpage.

Contact

If you have questions, contact your local Registered Dietitian at Community Health Services:

Medicine Hat	403-502-8200
Brooks	403-501-3300
Lethbridge	403-388-6666

For more information on this or other nutrition topics, go to www.healthyeatingstartshere.ca

Nutrition Services
Essential partners in health

Questions? Email us at publichealthnutrition.southzone@ahs.ca