



# Senior Friendly™

## Ideas for Healthy Eating

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## Planning Meals: Variety and Balance

A healthy diet is essential to feeling well and enjoying life to the fullest. Recent surveys show that most seniors do not eat enough grain products, milk products, vegetables and fruits. Eating too little of those foods can leave you tired, more prone to illness and perhaps even at increased risk of heart disease, cancer, diabetes and osteoporosis.

Healthy eating starts with following *Eating Well with Canada's Food Guide*. You can get a copy of the guide by calling 1-800 O-Canada (1 800 622-6232) or by visiting [www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide](http://www.healthcanada.gc.ca/foodguide)

### Enjoy a variety of nutritious foods

Be adventurous. Try something new each week, whether it is a new fruit, vegetable or grain product. Who knows—you may find a new favourite.

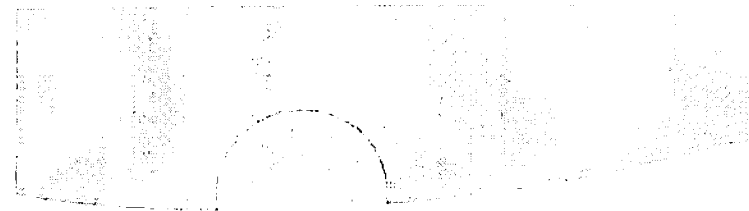
### Eat more grain products to provide energy and fibre

- Have a bowl of cooked cereal (like oatmeal) or high fibre ready-to-eat cereal for a meal or snack.

- Enjoy a small whole grain or bran muffin for a snack, or with cheese and fruit as a mini-meal.
- Try brown rice in casseroles and soups.
- Eat whole grain bread/buns/bagels/muffins, whole wheat pastas and brown or wild rice.
- Try other grains such as bulgur, barley, quinoa or couscous.

### Eat more vegetables and fruits for a powerful punch of nutrients

- Keep a package of frozen berries in your freezer to sprinkle on your cereal.
- Start lunch off with a bowl of low sodium tomato or vegetable soup, a salad or some raw vegetables.
- Make a vegetable stir-fry. Add some grated cheese and black beans, and you have an instant supper.
- Toss a handful of frozen vegetables (or leftovers) into soups and casseroles.
- Craving candy? Try some healthy dried fruit instead. Enjoy 60 mL (1/4 cup) of raisins, dates, dried apricots, prunes or dried apples.
- Enjoy a baked apple or fruit crisp.
- Take advantage of seasonal specials. Buy strawberries, peaches, pears and asparagus when they are in season.
- Enjoy 125 mL (1/2 cup) real fruit juice every day.



## Eat more dairy products and other calcium rich foods to keep bones healthy

- Use grated cheese on salads, casseroles or soups.
- Add milk instead of water to canned soup.
- Drink a glass of skim or one per cent milk as a bedtime snack.
- Add skim milk powder to sauces, soups, casseroles and omelettes.
- Melt cheese on toast for a change from butter and jam.
- Enjoy low-fat pudding (make with skim or 1% milk) or yogurt for dessert.
- Make a “latte” by mixing half a cup of coffee with half a cup of warmed milk.
- Have a salmon or sardine sandwich, or add fish to salads.
- Sprinkle almonds on salads, casseroles and puddings.

## Choose leaner meats and lower fat products

- Choose lean cuts of meat, such as round, flank and loin. Enjoy poultry, fish and seafood more often.
- Trim all visible fat from meats before cooking. Remove skin from poultry.
- Enjoy meatless meals more often. Try eggs, tofu, peanut butter, beans or lentils.

Dietitians provide food and nutrition information you can trust. Find a dietitian in your area at [www.dietitians.ca/find](http://www.dietitians.ca/find) or call 1-888-901-7776.



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## Oils and fats

Choose lower fat foods more often, but remember that some fat is essential in the diet. Choose unsaturated fats like oil, non-hydrogenated margarine or mayonnaise instead of saturated fats like butter and lard. Avoid trans fats from hydrogenated oil, hard margarine and shortening.

## Use salt, caffeine and alcohol in moderation

- Try using pepper and other herbs rather than salt.
- Cook without adding salt.
- Choose “lower in salt” products.
- Eat fewer canned foods, crackers, processed meats and other packaged products.
- Drink no more than 2 cups of drip coffee or no more than 4 cups of instant coffee per day.
- Alternate cups of coffee with cups of hot water or milk. Perhaps what you really like is something hot to drink.
- Try decaffeinated teas and coffees or, better yet, fruit juice or cold water.
- Limit your alcohol to no more than one drink a day.

For more nutrition information contact your local health unit, health centre or hospital.

Or visit [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca)

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