

Who We Are

The Wyoming Department of Health's Aging Division is committed to providing care, ensuring safety, and promoting independent choices for Wyoming's older adults.

The Community Living Section provides services for older adults and disabled individuals. The mission of the Community Living Section is: "To increase self-sufficiency, safety, health and wellness of Wyoming's older adults and people with disabilities in the least restrictive environment while supporting their caregivers".

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Eating Well As We Age



Sources:

1. "Choosing Healthy Meals As You Get Older." *National Institute on Aging*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1 July 2015, www.nia.nih.gov/health/choosing-healthy-meals-you-get-older.
2. "Healthy Eating After 50." *National Institute on Aging*, June 2008, order.nia.nih.gov/sites/default/files/2017-11/healthy-eating-after-50.pdf
3. "Overcoming Roadblocks to Healthy Eating." *National Institute on Aging*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, go4life.nia.nih.gov/tip-sheets/overcoming-roadblocks-healthy-eating
4. "Reading Food Labels." *National Institute on Aging*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1 May 2017, www.nia.nih.gov/health/reading-food-labels.
5. "Shopping for Food That's Good for You." *National Institute on Aging*, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 16 May 2017, www.nia.nih.gov/health/shopping-food-thats-good-you

**WYOMING DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
AGING DIVISION, COMMUNITY LIVING SECTION**
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What's on My Plate?

How much should I eat?

How much you eat depends on many different things. Calories are a measurement method to determine how much energy is in food.

You gain weight if you consume more calories than your body is using. Keep this in mind when choosing foods. Select those that are full of nutrients but not many calories².

How much is on my plate?

Portioning food amounts can be challenging for anyone. How does the food on your plate compare to how a reasonable portion of food? Here are some visualizations to help you².

- Deck of cards= 3 ounces of meat or poultry
- ½ baseball= ½ cup fruit, rice, pasta or ice cream
- Baseball= 1 cup of salad greens
- Fist= 1 cup of flaked cereal or a baked potato
- DVD= 1 pancake or tortilla

Food Choices

Eat a variety of foods from each group to help you get the nutrients you need. Here are some tips to get you started²:

- Eat an assortment of different colors and types of vegetables and fruits.
- Make sure at least half of your grains are whole grains.
- Limited saturated fats and trans fat, added sugars, and sodium.
- Choose low-fat or fat-free dairy foods.
- Try different sources of protein foods (fish, nuts, beans).
- Avoid empty calories. These are foods or drinks with few nutrients but loaded with calories (cookies, soda, chips).

*"I can't get out to go shopping".
"I don't have enough money to buy food".*

Short on money?

Having a limited budget may make it difficult to buy enough food or could keep you from eating well. It may take some planning to be able to pay for the foods you should eat.

Here are some other ways to keep your food cost down²:

- Buy only the foods you need and as much food as you will use. Keep a list with you while you are shopping!
- Generic or store brand foods often cost less than name brands.
- Look for items on sale and plan your meals around those foods.
- Divide leftovers into small servings, label and date, and freeze to use within a few months.
- Buy low-cost foods, such as dried beans, rice, and pasta.

Federal Government programs are available to help people with low incomes buy groceries. Contact your local DFS office for additional information.

Are you tired of cooking or eating alone?

Meals are more enjoyable when you eat with others! Try cooking with a friend to make a meal together, or invite a friend to join you or take part in a potluck. Search for meals offered at a nearby senior center, community center, or religious facility. You can engage in conversation with others while enjoying a low-cost meal¹. Find creative ways to make eating a pleasant experience!

Overcoming Roadblocks to Healthy Eating

Is shopping difficult?

You may have challenges that make shopping for food difficult and give you a reason for not going⁵. What can you do?

- Use motorized carts if available.
- Ask if there is an employee available who can help you reach things or push your cart.
- Plan to shop at a time of day when you are rested.
- If it is a busy grocery store, try to pick a time when it might not be crowded.
- Look for available benches or seats in the store where you can rest if you get tired.

Are you not able to go shopping for food?

Maybe you cannot drive anymore, or you may have trouble walking or standing for a long time⁵. What can you do?

- Ask the local food store to bring groceries to your home. Some stores deliver for free, while some require a delivery charge.
- Check with your local senior centers to see if there are volunteers in your area who can help.
- Ask a family member or neighbor to shop for you.
- Look for Home Health services in your local community.



Fluids

As you age, you may lose some of your sense of thirst. Drink water often, but also try and include other liquids like juice, milk or soup. Limit beverages with lots of added sugars, such as soda or sweetened tea. Be sure to take sips of liquids during a meal. Don't wait until you feel thirsty- drink plenty of fluids throughout the day².

Fiber

Fiber plays an important role in digestion. It aids in the regulatory of bowel movements and can prevent constipation, stomach or intestine problems. Fiber is found in foods from plants, like fruits, vegetables, beans, nuts and whole grains. Adding fiber into the diet can be done by:



- Regularly eating cooked dry beans, peas, or lentils.
- Eating the skins on fruit and vegetables.
- Choosing whole fruits rather than fruit juices.
- Eating whole-grain breads.

Drinking liquids throughout the day to help fiber move through the intestines².

Salt

Salt is listed as sodium on the Nutrition Facts label. Be sure to look for this on the label. A small amount of sodium is needed for the body to function properly, but too much can lead to high blood pressure. Most packaged foods have salt added to preserve foods. Choose foods labeled "low-sodium". Try using spices and herbs to add flavor to foods without adding sodium².

Reading Food Labels

Nutrition Facts Labels

Nutrition Facts labels are required by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) to be on all processed foods and beverages. The top of the label lists how many servings are in the container, followed by the FDA definition of a serving for that food or drink. Remember that the nutrition information, including calories, listed is for one serving, not the entire package or bottle⁴.

Daily Value (DV) is how much of each nutrient most people need each day. DV is based on a 2000 calorie diet. Use this section to choose foods that are high in good nutrients (fiber, calcium), and low in the nutrients you need less of (fat, sugar). If a food has 5% of the DV or less, it is low in that nutrient. If it has 20% or more, it is high in that nutrient.

Nutrition Facts	
8 servings per container	
Serving size 2/3 cup (55g)	
Amount per serving	
Calories 230	
% Daily Value*	
Total Fat 8g	10%
Saturated Fat 1g	5%
Trans Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 160mg	7%
Total Carbohydrate 37g	13%
Dietary Fiber 4g	14%
Total Sugars 12g	
Includes 10g Added Sugars	20%
Protein 3g	
Vitamin D 2mcg	10%
Calcium 260mg	20%
Iron 8mg	45%
Potassium 235mg	6%

* The % Daily Value (DV) tells you how much a nutrient in a serving of food contributes to a daily diet. 2,000 calories a day is used for general nutrition advice.

Ingredient List

Items listed are from largest to smallest ingredient. There is more of the first ingredient listed on the label than any other ingredient⁴.

Product Dates

- "Sell by" is the date by which the product should be sold or removed from the shelf⁴. Buy it before this date!
- "Use by" is the date which the product should be eaten for peak quality. Foods may not be safe to eat after the date listed⁴.
- "Best if used by" date is a suggestion for when the food is at its best flavor or quality. It is not a purchase or safety date⁴.

Problems with Food?

Upset Stomach

Maybe some of the foods you used to eat no longer agree with you, so you avoid eating them. You could be missing out on important nutrients by doing so! **Try different variations** of a food to see if symptoms can be alleviated. If you have a specific sensitivity or intolerance (gluten or lactose), talk to your doctor about getting tested³.

Appetite

Are you just not hungry? Aside from the many benefits of exercise, being active can help increase appetite and make you hungrier. Lack of appetite can be an effect of medications. Talk to your doctor may about possibly trying a different drug. If food isn't appealing, **vary the shape, color and texture**. Look for a new food you haven't tried before³!

Taste

As you grow older, your sense of taste and smell may change. Foods may seem to have lost flavor. Medication side effects and other things can affect these senses- talk to your doctor! Try using lemon juice, vinegar, or herbs to boost the flavor of foods³.

Chewing & Swallowing

Is it harder to chew your food? People who have problems with their teeth or dentures often avoid eating meat, fruits or vegetables. These foods have important nutrients! Try eating softer foods like cooked or canned fruits and vegetables, or soups. See you dentist if you're having trouble chewing or your dentures aren't fitting properly³. If food get stuck in your throat it may be due to less saliva. **Drink plenty of liquids** with your meals to alleviate swallowing problems³.