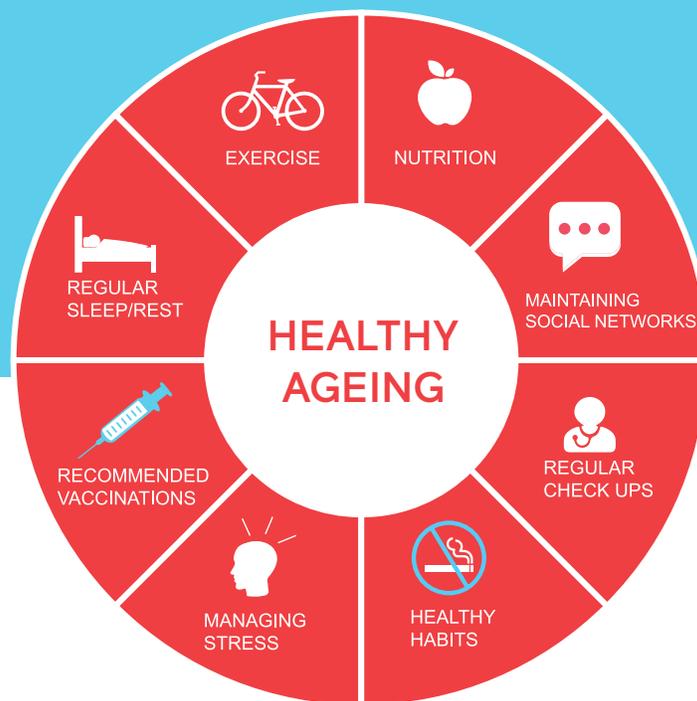


# LIVING LONGER, LIVING WELL: YOUR GUIDE TO HEALTHY AGEING

INFORMATION FOR OLDER ADULTS, FAMILIES,  
AND CAREGIVERS



## READ THIS PAMPHLET TO LEARN:

- What you can do to Enable Healthy Ageing.
- How to Stay Healthy through Nutrition and Exercise.
- Resources that Support Healthy Ageing.



**Sinai Health System**

HEALTHY AGEING AND GERIATRICS

# THE IMPORTANCE OF **HEALTHY AGEING**

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Encouraging a balanced diet, regular physical exercise, remaining socially active, and avoiding certain behaviours like smoking have been shown to reduce one's chance of developing a variety of chronic diseases. These behaviours have also been shown to extend an individual's overall life expectancy by as many as five more years.

Healthy Ageing is more than just living longer, but also about enabling us to maximize our quality of life as we age.

## WHAT YOU CAN DO TO **ENABLE HEALTHY AGEING**

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There are many things you can incorporate into your daily activities that can enable healthy ageing:

- A Balanced Diet
- Avoiding Smoking
- Drinking Alcohol in Moderation
- Regular Physical Exercise
- Regular Sleep and Rest
- Managing Stress
- Getting Recommended Vaccinations
- Maintaining Social Networks and Keeping Active in Social Activities/Outings
- Staying in Contact with your Health Care Provider

# NUTRITION TIPS FOR OLDER ADULTS

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As you get older, your nutrient needs change. You may need to change your daily eating habits to ensure you are maintaining a healthy weight. If you are not as physically active, you may also need to eat fewer calories by eating balanced meals with nutrient-rich foods.

## MAINTAINING HEALTHY WEIGHT

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- Eat regularly by having three balanced meals each day and adding small snacks between meals.
- Ensure you are eating nutrient-dense foods.
- Limit high fat and high sugar foods.
- Eat foods high in dietary fibre.
- Reduce sodium (salt) to avoid water retention and high blood pressure (Less than 1,500 mg a day).
- Drink more water to keep hydrated, reduce constipation and improve digestion.

## SERVING SIZES

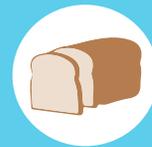
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How many servings of each food group you should eat each day:



### Fruits & Vegetables

- 7 Servings for Males
- 7 Servings for Females



### Grain Products

- 7 Servings for Males
- 6 Servings for Females



### Milk & Alternatives

- 3 Servings for Males
- 3 Servings for Females

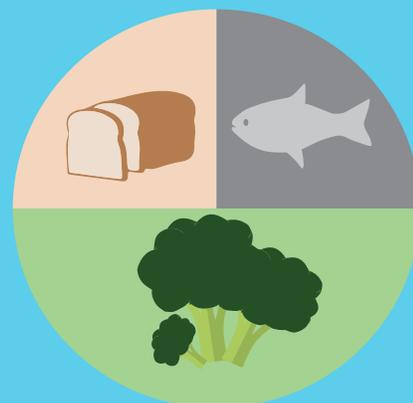


### Meat & Alternatives

- 3 Servings for Males
- 3 Servings for Females

## PLATE METHOD:

Use the plate method when planning meals. Fill 1/2 the plate with vegetables, 1/4 with meat/meat alternatives, and 1/4 plate with a starchy vegetable or whole grain serving.



## RECOMMENDED VITAMINS & MINERALS

As you get older, it may become harder for your body to absorb the vitamins and minerals you need. A balanced diet (see page 3) can often give you all the vitamins and minerals you need.

You may find that even when eating balanced meals, your body is still not getting the right amounts of vitamins and minerals it needs. A low-dose multi-vitamin or supplement can help in these cases. Your health care provider may also recommend you take additional vitamin and mineral supplementation. Always check with your health care provider and pharmacist before starting supplements.

## IMPORTANT VITAMINS AND MINERALS

Vitamin/ Mineral	Amount Per Day	Sources
 <b>Vitamin D</b>	Ages 50-70 = 600 UI Ages 70 & Older = 800 IU	Sunlight, milk, fish
 <b>Vitamin B<sub>12</sub></b>	2.4 mcg	Meat, chicken, fish, milk and milk alternatives
 <b>Calcium</b>	1,000 mg	3 servings of milk or milk alternatives
 <b>Iron</b>	Males: 8 mg Females: 8 mg	Beef, poultry, beans, leafy greens

## AVOIDING SMOKING

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As an older adult, the long-term effects of smoking can be extremely dangerous. There is heightened risk for various health conditions such as cardiovascular disease, respiratory conditions, and cancer.

Quitting can be difficult, but it's never too late. For tips and resources on how to quit smoking, visit the Lung Association's website at [www.lung.ca/quit](http://www.lung.ca/quit)



## DRINKING IN MODERATION

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If you choose to drink alcohol, only do so in moderation. Drinking too much alcohol can increase your risk of health problems, including memory loss and falls, or worsen current conditions in your later years.

There are many benefits to reducing your alcohol consumption, some of which include:

- Reduced risk of heart disease and diabetes
- Increased energy and less feelings of fatigue
- Improved sleep
- Improved weight management as alcohol is high in calories

**Many prescription medicines can be dangerous when mixed with alcohol. Always talk to your health care provider about your medications if drinking alcohol.**

# BENEFITS OF REGULAR EXERCISE

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Regular physical activity and exercise are beneficial for staying physically and mentally healthy as we age. Regular exercise has proven long-term health benefits.

Older adults should aim to exercise for **30 minutes per day**. There are many exercises or daily activities you can incorporate into your routine to stay healthy and active.



## STAYING PHYSICALLY ACTIVE

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You can incorporate the activities listed below into your routine to stay healthy and active:

- Walking
- Light Jogging
- Dancing Classes
- Water Aerobics
- Chair Exercises
- Yoga
- Stretching Exercises
- Gardening
- Walking your dog
- Taking the Stairs instead of the Elevator

### DID YOU KNOW?

Climbing 20 flights of stairs a week reduces one's risk of death by 10%.

# WHY IS REGULAR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY IMPORTANT?

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Why is Regular Physical Activity Important for Older Adults? It:

- Gives You More Energy
- Promotes Mental and Cognitive Health
- Increases Physical Strength
- Promotes a more Restful Sleep
- Decreases Feelings of Fatigue
- Maintains/Improves Heart Health
- Reduces Feelings of Depression/Anxiety/Stress
- Improves Blood Sugar Control
- Maintains Bone Strength

## REGULAR EXERCISE CAN HELP PREVENT FALLS

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When you get older, you have a greater risk of falling or tripping. In fact, 1 in 3 older adults fall each year. This can cause serious injuries.

Exercising regularly can help prevent falls by:

- Making your Muscles and Bones Stronger and More Flexible
- Improving your Balance
- Improving your Coordination and Reaction Times

**Did you know?** Ontario has over 2,000 free exercise and falls prevention classes for older adults aged 65 and older.

**Visit [ontario.ca/healthcareoptions](https://ontario.ca/healthcareoptions)** to find the closest exercise and falls prevention class in your community.

## HOW TO SLEEP WELL AS YOU AGE

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As we get older, we may find it harder to fall and stay asleep. Many older adults may feel less satisfied with the sleep they are getting and feel more tired during the day. The lack of quality sleep can affect your energy, emotions, and overall health.

### DURING THE DAY

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- Avoid large meals and drinking fluids a few hours before bedtime.
- Limit or eliminate alcohol, caffeine, and nicotine.
- Exercise regularly but not within 2 hours of your bedtime.
- Get adequate exposure to bright light during the day.
- Avoid napping.
- Get out of bed at the same time each morning.

## HOURS OF SLEEP

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There is no “right amount” of sleep. As we get older, our sleeping needs change. You may need to sleep less and feel just as rested.

### DURING THE NIGHT

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- Make sure your bedroom is quiet, dark, and cool to keep comfortable throughout the night.
- If it helps, use soothing noise (e.g. a fan, other appliance, “white noise” machine).
- Remove electronics from the room.
- Develop a sleep ritual (same routine each night before going to bed).
- If possible, avoid using sleeping aids and pills to help you sleep as many of these can increase your risk of falls.

## RECOMMENDED VACCINATIONS FOR OLDER CANADIANS

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Many older Canadians are at increased risk of developing preventable diseases. To avoid this, talk to your health care provider about the recommended vaccinations for older Canadians:

- Pneumonia (Pneumococcal)
- Shingles (Varicella/Herpes Zoster)
- Tetanus
- Yearly Flu Shot



## MAINTAINING STRONG SOCIAL NETWORKS

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Staying socially active and maintaining positive relationships can help you maintain your physical and emotional health.

You can stay social and active by:

- Volunteering in your community.
- Joining a group focused on activities you enjoy, such as an exercise class or book club.
- Taking classes or finding hobbies that keep you interested.
- Getting involved at your local older adults centre.
- Joining a local fitness centre to stay physically active.
- Staying connected with friends, family, or coworkers by phone, email, or in-person visits as much as possible.

## SUGGESTED RESOURCES

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### HEALTHY EATING AND NUTRITION RESOURCES

#### EAT RIGHT ONTARIO - A GUIDE TO HEALTHY EATING FOR OLDER ADULTS:

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Find tips and ideas to make eating easy and enjoyable for older adults.



[www.eatrightontario.ca/en/Articles/Seniors-nutrition/A-Guide-to-Healthy-Eating-for-Older-Adults](http://www.eatrightontario.ca/en/Articles/Seniors-nutrition/A-Guide-to-Healthy-Eating-for-Older-Adults)

#### HEALTHY EATING: VARIETY AND BALANCE:

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A collection of fact sheets including budgeting, cooking, and healthy eating advice.



[www.dietitians.ca/Your-Health/Nutrition-A-Z/Seniors/Planning-Meals-Variety-and-Balance](http://www.dietitians.ca/Your-Health/Nutrition-A-Z/Seniors/Planning-Meals-Variety-and-Balance)

#### HEALTH CANADA: CANADA'S FOOD GUIDE:

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Canada's recommendations for safe food and nutrition.



[www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php)



### PUBLIC HEALTH AGENCY OF CANADA (PHAC): PHYSICAL ACTIVITY GUIDELINES:

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PHAC supported the Canadian Society of Exercise Physiology (CSEP) guidelines on physical activity for older adults.



[www.csep.ca/en/guidelines/get-the-guidelines](http://www.csep.ca/en/guidelines/get-the-guidelines)

### EXERCISE AND FALLS PREVENTION PROGRAMS

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Older Adults (aged 65 and older) can join one of 2,000 free classes across Ontario to help maintain balance and strength to prevent falls.



Call 211 or the Community Care Access Centre (CCAC) at 310-CCAC (2222) (No Area Code Needed)



[www.ontario.ca/page/exercise-and-falls-prevention-programs](http://www.ontario.ca/page/exercise-and-falls-prevention-programs)

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Visit [www.sinaigeriatrics.ca/healtheducation](http://www.sinaigeriatrics.ca/healtheducation) for additional resources for older adults, families and caregivers.