

# NUTRITION NEWS

WRITTEN BY: SHANNON DAVIS, RD, CDN

LAYOUT BY: JACQUELINE MURPHY

MARCH 2021

## National Nutrition Month



Did you know that your nutritional needs change as you age? A basic plan for health promotion in your older years includes eating a proper diet focusing on a variety of foods and moderation in fat, as well as performing regular physical activity, maintaining or improving body weight status, consuming adequate fluids, abstaining from smoking, limiting alcohol intake, and getting adequate sleep. See how well you do answering the following true/false questions regarding your changing nutrient needs.

1. Medication taken by the elderly can cause nutritional problems.
2. The greatest nutritional problem for many Americans is overeating.
3. Older people often lose their desire for liquids.
4. Vitamin B12 absorption often decreases in elderly people.
5. The most frequent intestinal problem in the elderly is constipation.

6. Excessive intake of Vitamin A supplements can cause bone pain and hair loss in the elderly.
7. Delayed wound healing should alert a physician to examine the protein, zinc, and Vitamin C intake of an elderly person.
8. An active lifestyle helps to maintain muscle and bone mass.
9. Dietary recommendations made by the American Heart Association could substantially reduce blood cholesterol in every individual.
10. If older Americans follow the Food Guide or My Plate recommendations, they should end up receiving adequate amounts of all nutrients.



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

|                                |   |
|--------------------------------|---|
| ANSWERS AND EXPLANATIONS       | 2 |
| PROBIOTICS AND IMMUNE HEALTH   | 3 |
| DATE, ALMOND, AND YOGURT BREAD | 4 |

### Monthly Exercise

Seated Knee Raises

1. Lift your left knee and then lower it
2. Repeat 5-10 times
3. Lift your right knee and then lower it
4. Repeat 5-10 times

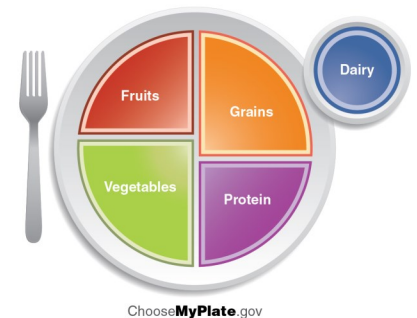


1. True. Drug nutrient interactions can be a problem at any age, but because the elderly generally take more and different combinations of drugs over a long period, nutritional status is more likely to be affected.
2. True. Overeating can lead to being overweight or obese. Being overweight contributes to almost all the chronic diseases common in our society.
3. True. The sense of thirst may diminish with age, but not the need for fluids,
4. True. Stomach secretions that promote absorption of Vitamin B12 decrease with age.
5. True. Increasing fiber and fluid intake can help reduce constipation.
6. Excessive intake of Vitamin A supplements results in more toxicity problems, and more so in the elderly.
7. True. Be aware of these nutrients if you are involved in the care of elderly people or have the chance to advise elderly relatives, as they are needed for wound healing.
8. True. Physical activity is an important part of body maintenance including that of muscles and bones.
9. False. People differ in genetic background, ability to regulate cholesterol metabolism, and responsiveness to diets aimed at lowering blood cholesterol. However, there is no way to know how much a diet will help lower blood cholesterol until a person tries it.
10. False. Though a well planned diet that follows the Food Guide Pyramid can meet nearly all the nutrient needs for older people within about 1600 to 1800 calories, it will likely fall short in folate

and calcium unless carefully planned. In addition, if an older person cannot consume this amount of energy, it is possible that other nutrients may be inadequate as well. Adding a fortified breakfast cereal to the food plan may help.

Since 1992, the USDA provided the food guide pyramid, which was the standard for the recommended intake of healthy adults. As of 2010, the USDA wants Americans to think in terms of “my plate”, which has the new guidelines for proper nutrition. Why the change? More than 2/3 of American adults and more than 1/3 of American children were considered obese, which prompted the change.

One of the key concepts of the My Plate template is portion size. Reading food labels can be overwhelming, so the following information should be helpful in managing your portion control. Aim for 1/2 cup of starches (such as pasta, rice, and starch vegetables like corn and peas). Half cup portions are also appropriate for vegetables. Keep in mind that most vegetables are considered “free”, meaning that portion size is less important as vegetables tend to be low in calories and fat and high in vitamins, minerals, and fiber. A protein source should consist of a 3-4 ounce serving. For example, a piece of chicken that is similar to the size of the palm of your hand or the size of a deck of cards constitutes a 3 or 4 ounce serving. Serving sizes for fruits are also half cup servings or one small fruit (such as one small apple or one small orange) If you are not a diabetic, fruits may also be used liberally. Keep in mind that fruit juices are not as nutritious as whole fruits, and



since they can contain added sugars, are generally limited more than fruit intake.

It is always important to have a strong immune system. But the pandemic over the past year has certainly strengthened this assertion.

Probiotics (live microorganisms that confer a health benefit to their host) have been scientifically proven to improve the function and health of the gastrointestinal tract, or “gut.” Recently, probiotics have gotten some recognition as being integral in promoting the health of your immune system as well. Studies are ongoing. And while it’s clear that probiotics play a role in the function of our immune systems, it is premature to go about recommending that the general public take a probiotic to fight off common illnesses, including Covid 19.

That being said, it also unlikely that probiotics would cause any harm to the average healthy individual (when used moderately). Probiotics contain live organisms, usually specific strains of bacteria that directly add to the population of healthy microbes in your gut. You can take probiotics through both food and supplements. The most common probiotic food is yogurt.

Yogurt is made by fermenting milk with different bacteria. The bacteria remain in the final product. Other bacteria-fermented foods include sauerkraut and kimchi and are also good sources of probiotics.



Probiotic supplements also contain live bacteria. A single dose may include a particular strain of microbe or a blend of microbes. It is important to realize that you may need to research and

choose a supplement that is appropriate for your condition. And if you’re looking to boost your immunity, there may be a specific bacteria for that.

One type of bacteria that is commonly used is lactobacillus. But there are more than 120 species of lactobacillus, and at least a dozen of them are used as probiotics.

There are other supplements that are touted as promoting immunity. The Cleveland Clinic still recommends Vitamin C as the biggest immune booster of all. In fact, a lack of Vitamin C can even make you more prone to getting sick. Daily intake is imperative because your body doesn’t produce or store the vitamin. Foods rich in Vitamin C include oranges, grapefruits, tangerines, strawberries, bell peppers, spinach, kale, and broccoli.

The Cleveland Clinic also recommends using Vitamin B6 as well as Vitamin E to promote immune function. B6 supports biochemical reactions in the immune system while Vitamin E is a powerful antioxidant. Foods rich in B6 include chicken, tuna, and salmon. Chick peas are also high in Vitamin B6. Vitamin E rich foods include nuts, seeds, and spinach.

Lastly, zinc has gotten a lot of press recently. Claims include being able to stave off the common cold, preventing infections, and even playing a role in fighting Covid. While these claims need to be researched further, consuming a diet rich in zinc offers no detriments. Zinc rich foods include meats, shellfish, legumes, nuts, and seeds.



These recipes are loaded with all of the benefits of antioxidants, probiotics, and zinc!

**Date Almond, and Yogurt Bread**

- 3/4 cup slivered almonds
- 1 cup white sugar
- 1/2 cup butter, softened
- 3/4 cup whole milk yogurt
- 2 eggs
- 2 cups flour
- 1 tsp baking soda
- 1 tsp ground nutmeg
- 1/2 tsp salt
- 1 cup chopped dates

**HEAP**

If you received HEAP last year but have not yet received an application for this year, please call our Office at 867-1195.

If you did not receive HEAP last year but want to apply this year, please call our Office at 867-1195.

**HERKIMER COUNTY  
OFFICE FOR THE AGING**

109 Mary St., Herkimer, NY 13350  
 Phone: 315-867-1121  
 Fax: 315-867-1448  
 Email: [hcofa@herkimercounty.org](mailto:hcofa@herkimercounty.org)  
 Web: [www.herkimercounty.org](http://www.herkimercounty.org); then 'departments' then 'Office for the Aging'

Funding for this newsletter is from the NYS Office for the Aging & Herkimer County

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 6 inch baking pan. Spread almonds on a baking sheet. Toast almonds in the preheated oven until they turn a golden brown and become fragrant, about 5 minutes.

Combine sugar and butter in a large bowl; beat with an electric mixer until creamy. Beat in yogurt and eggs. Mix flour, baking soda, nutmeg, and salt. Fold 1/2 cup toasted almonds and dates into the batter.

Pour batter into the prepared pan. Top with remaining 1/4 cup toasted almonds.

Bake in the preheated oven until a toothpick inserted into the center comes out clean, about 50-60 minutes.

**Yogurt Bark**

- 1(17.6 ounce) container full fat Greek yogurt
- 2 tbs maple syrup
- 1/4 tsp vanilla extract
- 1/4 cup sliced almonds
- 1/4 cup freeze dried blueberries
- 2 tbs chocolate chips

Line baking sheet with parchment paper. Whisk together yogurt, maple syrup, and vanilla. Spread the mixture out to 1/4 inch thick. Scatter almonds, berries, and chocolate on top. Place in freezer for at least 3 hours or overnight. Remove from freezer and roughly break into about 2 dozen pieces.

