

Nutrition Notes

SUMMER 2024

Area Agency on Aging District 7, Inc.

*Serving Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence,
Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton Counties in Ohio*

www.aaa7.org **Helping You Age *Better!***



Nutrition Tips for Seniors

As we age, a balanced diet is crucial in supporting physical health, preventing chronic diseases, and enhancing the quality of life. Here are ten essential tips for healthy nutrition for aging seniors:

1. Prioritize Protein Intake

Protein is vital for maintaining muscle mass, which naturally declines with age. Including lean protein sources such as poultry, fish, beans, and low-fat dairy products in your diet can help preserve muscle strength and function. Aim for a variety of protein sources to ensure a well-rounded diet.

2. Stay Hydrated

Dehydration is a common issue among seniors due to a diminished sense of thirst. Drinking adequate water is crucial for overall health, aiding in digestion, circulation, and temperature regulation. Include hydrating foods like fruits and vegetables as well.

3. Incorporate Fiber-Rich Foods

A diet high in fiber helps maintain bowel health, prevent constipation, and manage blood sugar levels. Whole grains, fruits, vegetables, legumes, and nuts are excellent sources of dietary fiber. Including these in your daily meals can improve digestion and lower the risk of cardiovascular disease.

4. Opt for Nutrient-Dense Foods

As caloric needs decrease with age, it becomes essential to choose foods that are rich in nutrients rather than empty calories. Nutrient-dense foods like leafy greens, berries, lean meats, and whole grains provide essential vitamins and minerals without excessive calories.

5. Monitor Calcium and Vitamin D Intake

Calcium and Vitamin D are crucial for bone health. Seniors are at a higher risk of osteoporosis and fractures, making it important to ensure sufficient intake of these nutrients. Dairy products, fortified plant milks, leafy greens, and supplements can help meet the required levels.

6. Limit Salt and Sugar

Excessive salt can potentially lead to hypertension, while too much sugar can contribute to weight gain



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and possible heart disease risks. Reduce your intake of processed foods, which are often high in sodium and sugar. Instead, flavor your meals with herbs and spices, and opt for natural sweeteners like fruit.

7. Choose Nutrient-Dense Snacks

Choose nutrient-dense snacks like fresh fruits and vegetables, nuts and seeds, and low-fat yogurt or cottage cheese to boost your intake of essential vitamins and minerals. Pair whole-grain crackers with natural nut butter or enjoy hummus with sliced veggies for a balanced snack that includes protein, healthy fats, and fiber. Smoothies made with fruits, leafy greens, and Greek yogurt, as well as hard-boiled eggs, also offer convenient, nutrient-packed options to keep you satisfied and energized between meals.

8. Incorporate Healthy Fats

Healthy fats are essential for heart health. Include sources of unsaturated fats like avocados, nuts, seeds, and olive oil in your diet. Limit intake of saturated and trans fats found in fried foods and processed snacks.

9. Stay Active and Adjust Caloric Intake

Regular physical activity is important for maintaining a healthy weight and overall health. Consult with your primary care provider about ways to get active.

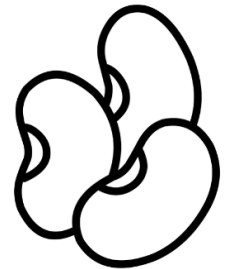
10. Consult with a Dietitian or Nutritionist

Individual nutritional needs can vary greatly among seniors. Consulting with a registered dietitian or nutritionist can provide personalized dietary advice tailored to your specific health conditions, medications, and lifestyle. They can help create a balanced meal plan that meets all your nutritional needs. You can call your local hospital and ask how to get an appointment with a registered dietitian.

Garlic Parmesan White Beans

Cook Time: 15 Minutes | Serves: 4

- 3 to 4 garlic cloves, minced
- Extra virgin olive oil
- 2 15-ounce cans cannellini beans, drained
- 1 cup cherry tomatoes, halved
- Kosher salt and black pepper
- 1 teaspoon Aleppo pepper
- ½ teaspoon cumin
- 1 cup chopped fresh parsley
- ¼ to ⅓ cup shaved Parmesan cheese
- ¼ cup grated Pecorino Romano
- Juice of half a lemon



Instructions

- In a large pan, warm 2 Tablespoons extra virgin olive oil over medium heat. Add the garlic and cook briefly, tossing regularly, until just golden.
- Add the cannellini beans and ½ cup water. Season with kosher salt, black pepper, and the spices. Add the tomatoes. Cook, stirring occasionally until warmed through (about 10 minutes).
- Stir in the parsley, cheese, and lemon juice.
- Finish with a generous drizzle of extra virgin olive oil. Serve immediately with pita or your favorite crusty bread.

Ways to Eat More Beans

Beans are a versatile, nutritious, and cost-effective addition to any diet, providing a rich source of protein, fiber, vitamins, and minerals. Regular consumption of beans can contribute significantly to a nutritious diet, supporting digestive health, reducing cholesterol levels, and promoting feeling full. It is recommend to consume beans at least 3-4 times per week to reap their numerous benefits.



To incorporate beans into your diet more often, consider starting with simple substitutions. Replace ground meat with black beans or lentils in dishes like tacos, chili, and even spaghetti. This not only reduces the intake of saturated fats but also adds a hearty texture and flavor to your meals. Salads can be made more filling and nutritious by adding chickpeas, kidney beans, or cannellini beans, turning a light dish into a substantial meal.

Another easy way to enjoy beans is by preparing bean-based soups and stews. Classics like minestrone or black bean soup are comforting and packed with nutrients. For a quick and easy option, puree cooked beans with garlic, olive oil, and lemon juice to create a delicious spread like hummus or white bean dip, perfect for sandwiches or as a dip for vegetables.

Incorporating beans into your diet doesn't have to be limited to savory dishes. Sweet treats like black bean brownies or chickpea-based cookie dough provide a surprising and nutritious twist on traditional desserts. These recipes often utilize the creamy texture of beans to create moist and satisfying treats without sacrificing flavor.

Beans can also be a great addition to breakfast. Incorporating black beans into a breakfast burrito is a simple way to start your day with a boost of protein and fiber. This can help keep you full longer and provide sustained energy throughout the morning.

Ensuring that beans become a regular part of your diet can be as simple as planning ahead. Keep a variety of canned beans in your pantry for quick meals or cook a large batch of dried beans and freeze portions for later use. By integrating beans into your weekly meal planning, you can enjoy their health benefits and delicious versatility more often. How many ways will you come up with to enjoy the benefits of beans?

Our Resource Center is OPEN and available to answer your questions about home and community-based resources in your community!

1-800-582-7277
info@aaa7.org



HEAP Summer Crisis Program

Eligible households can receive a one-time benefit to assist with electric utility bills, central air conditioning repairs, and air conditioning unit and/or fan purchases.

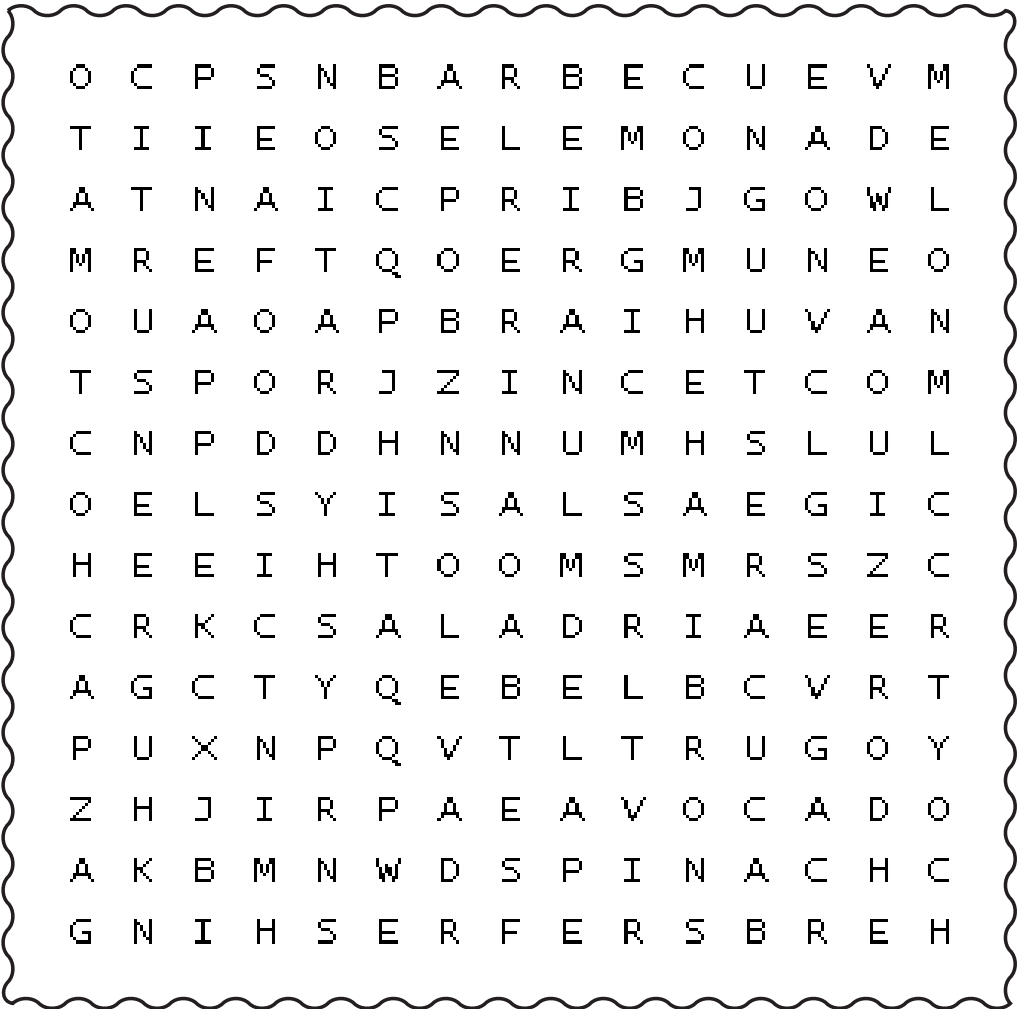
If interested or if you have questions or need an application, contact your county Community Action Agency or the AAA7 Resource Center at 1-800-582-7277.



Word Find

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Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program Applications Available

The Senior Farmers’ Market Nutrition Program (SFMNP) is a federally-funded program administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Food and Nutrition Services Agency and in Ohio by the Ohio Department of Aging (ODA).

To be eligible for \$50 to use with authorized farmers in the program, individuals must live in the 10 counties included in the AAA7’s district: Adams, Brown, Gallia, Highland, Jackson, Lawrence, Pike, Ross, Scioto and Vinton.

An online application is currently on the Ohio Department of Aging website which can be accessed from our AAA7 website at www.aaa7.org under the “Happening Now” section.

There will no longer be paper coupons as there have been in the past – this year, applicants can choose between a mobile option or physical benefit card. Please note that the physical card will arrive later than the mobile benefit.

If you have questions, please call the AAA7 Senior Farmer’s Market Nutrition Program direct line at **1-800-343-8112** or email **FarmersMarket@aaa7.org**.