

ANYONE CAN FALL

Prevent it from happening to you

Maintaining A Healthy Diet

A healthy diet helps maintain or improve your health. It provides your body with the nutrition and the energy you need throughout the day. Good nutrition is essential at any age. However, maintaining a well-balanced diet is especially important for older adults. Our bodies need less food and fewer calories as we age, yet they require the same amount or even more of certain vitamins and minerals. If we are not careful about what we eat and drink as we age, there can be negative effects on our daily lives.

Calcium

Calcium helps slow bone loss. This lowers the risk of fracture. However, as our bodies age, they absorb calcium less effectively. To help address this issue, older adults are encouraged to consume calcium-rich foods such as:

- Dairy products (milk, yogurt, cheese)
- Calcium-fortified soy, almond and rice beverages
- Dark green leafy vegetables (kale, broccoli)
- Fish with edible soft bones (canned salmon or sardines)

FALLS ARE NOT A NORMAL PART OF AGING.
Talk to your health care provider if you have had a fall.

Finding Balance
NOVA SCOTIA
Trauma NB

Nutrition Tips

Ensure you are eating a well-balanced diet including all three food groups (whole grain products, fruits and vegetables and protein foods) according to Canada's Food Guide. In addition, you are encouraged to take steps such as:

- Trying to eat at regular times. Plan for three meals and one-three small snacks every day.
- Avoiding skipping any meal, but especially breakfast, since it makes it harder to get all the nutrients you need for the day.
- Checking your weight or watching to see if your clothes, jewelry, or belts are looser than usual if you think you have been eating less or don't have much appetite.

Keep in mind that fast weight loss is not healthy. Losing weight too quickly can affect your muscle and bone health. This will increase your risk of falls and fall-related injuries.

Hydration Tips

As we age, our sense of thirst declines and our bodies tend to store less water. Certain medications can also alter our body's ability to retain fluids. All this can lead to dehydration. Older adults may need to drink regularly, whether they feel thirsty or not. That's especially true during the warm summer months. In addition, older adults are encouraged to take steps which include:

- Trying to satisfy your thirst with water first. But remember juice, milk, tea, and coffee also count towards your total fluid intake.
- Drinking hot soups for those who prefer savory foods. Warm chicken, beef or vegetable broth can be a soothing source of fluids and important electrolytes.
- Having water or another non-alcoholic beverage in between every drink. Keep in mind that alcohol use may cause dehydration.

Consulting a Professional

Talk with a qualified healthcare professional if you have any concerns about:

- Feeling unusually tired, lightheaded, or dizzy
- Losing weight too quickly and especially without trying
- Needing help improving your diet

NOTE: Always follow specific diet instructions provided by your primary care provider or dietician.

SCAN for the website

For more fall prevention information and **resources for older adults and caregivers**, visit the Finding Balance NS website at ***www.FindingBalanceNS.ca***

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