Tips to Controlling Your Weight as You Age

Older adults do not need as many calories (or food energy) as younger generations, yet seniors do not always adjust their eating patterns to do this. Add in the hormonal changes that both women and men face in their later years, and one could experience weight gain. Losing weight when needed can reduce the risk of heart disease, help better control diabetes, and increase flexibility of the joints and overall mobility.

No need for extreme diets or drastic weight loss. Your goal should be to eat better and smarter while eating less. Fad diets frequently eliminate entire food groups, which can lead to serious nutrient gaps. Rapid weight loss often leads to a loss of lean body mass (or muscle), the opposite of what older people need for good health. Weight-loss programs should focus on exercise, nutrition and subscribing to a healthy lifestyle.

Getting Nutrients

As we getting older, we need fewer calories, but more nutrients, especially protein, B-vitamins, vitamin D, and calcium to protect bones and muscles and to give you energy to function in daily life. In terms of nutrition, you need to focus on quality not quantity.

Choose nutrient-dense foods which contain lots of vitamins, minerals and other nutrients, but are relatively low in calories. Complex carbohydrates, such as whole-grain pasta and rice, are nutrient-dense because they provide fiber (and vitamins) that keeps you feeling full for longer periods of time. Fresh fruits and vegetables are chock-full of vitamins, and many of them are low in calories. Low-fat dairy products, beans and tofu can offer a healthy dose of protein. So for a healthy eating plan, choose foods from all the MyPlate food groups.

Steady Reduction

A weight-loss program for older adults should include a steady reduction of weight (one or two pounds per month) and calories while gradually increasing physical activity. The number of calories you need depends on your height, weight, age, and overall fitness level. Reducing the amount of fat in your diet can help cut down on the calories. Total fats should make up between 25 and 30 percent of your daily caloric intake. For a 1600 calorie diet for example, the total fat intake would be 400-480 calories or 44-53 grams of fat—from dairy, meats, oils, nuts, etc.

Staying Active

Physical activity plays an important role in weight-loss. Being active through exercise strengthens your muscles and contributes to flexibility and endurance and burns calories at the same time. 60 to 90 minutes of moderate physical activity daily is recommended to lose weight and sustain the loss while staying within your individual caloric needs. Weight-bearing exercise in which you use your own body weight as a force of resistance is important in order to maintain muscle and bone mass. Weight-bearing activities include lifting weights, using stretch bands, walking, pushups, and pullups.
Tips to Curb Hunger and Eat Less

Adding more of these foods to your diet can help curb hunger and help you feel fuller on fewer calories:

- Soups, stews, cooked whole grains, and beans
- Fruits and vegetables—add fruit to salads or enjoy as dessert
- Shredded or chopped vegetables to pasta and egg dishes, main-dish salads, and other mixed dishes, and use them to top pizzas.
- Eat whole fruits instead of fruit juices or dried fruits.
- Use a blender to whip air into fruit drinks, smoothies, or sauces.
- Choose whole-grain puffed cereals, popcorn, breads, cereals, and pasta.
- Enjoy vegetable salads or broth-based soups before meals.
- Top entree salads with lean meats, poultry, eggs, tofu, beans, nuts, or fish.
- Have lean protein like eggs, fish, poultry or low-fat dairy at all meals and snacks, including breakfast.
- Choose meal replacement bars instead of the liquid ones.

Eat Mindfully to Feel Fuller

When your stomach is stretched from food, it sends a signal to the brain that you have had enough to eat. But that signal doesn’t always get through — especially when the dessert cart rolls around. To help stay in tune with your body’s signals it helps to slow down and eliminate distractions while you’re eating. Take a half an hour to finish your meal. To prolong the meal, chew slowly, put your fork down between bites, use chopsticks or your non-dominant hand, or simply take smaller forkfuls. Know and appreciate what you’re eating and enjoy your food!

http://www.eatright.org/resource/food/nutrition/dietary-guidelines-and-myplate/healthy-weights-for-healthy-older-adults
http://www.webmd.com/diet/obesity/features/foods-that-curb-hunger#1

Have a nutritional question or concern? If you are participating in services offered by Schenectady County’s Senior and Long Term Care services, you are eligible to have a free consultation with a Registered Dietitian. Call Cornell Cooperative Extension, Schenectady County at 372-1622, ext. 269. Leave a message, if necessary, for the dietitian to call you back.

Schenectady County Department of Senior and Long Term Care Services denies no person services or access to service based upon race, color, sex, religion, national origin, marital status and/or handicapping conditions. Schenectady County Department of Senior and Long Term Care Services is primarily funded with County tax dollars. Supplemental funding is through the New York State Office for the Aging under Title III-B/D, III-C-1, III-C-2, III-F of the Federal Older Americans Act, and New York State Expanded In-Home Services for the Elderly (EISEP), Community Services for the Elderly Act (CSE), Congregate Services Initiative (CSI), and the Wellness In Nutrition (WIN).

OFA—Bone Health 4/2017

Consumer-centered access for long-term care information, referrals and assessments. For information, call 382-8481, #9, ext.304
Cut Down on Added Sugars

What Are Added Sugars? Just like it sounds, added sugars aren’t in foods naturally—they’re added. They include:

- Sugars and syrups that food manufacturers add to products like sodas, yogurt, candies, cereals, and cookies
- Sugar you add yourself—like the teaspoon of sugar in your coffee

Some foods have sugar naturally—like fruits, vegetables, and milk. The sugars in these foods are not added sugars.

What’s the Problem with Added Sugars?

Eating and drinking too many foods and beverages with added sugars makes it difficult to achieve a healthy eating pattern without taking in too many calories. Added sugars contribute calories, but no essential nutrients.

What Foods Have Added Sugars? Some include:

- Regular sodas, energy drinks, and sports drinks
- Candy
- Fruit drinks, such as fruitades and fruit punch
- Cakes, cookies, and brownies
- Pies and cobblers
- Sweet rolls, pastries, and doughnuts
- Dairy desserts, such as ice cream

Check the Ingredients: Look for added sugars in the ingredients list. The higher up added sugars are on the list, the more added sugar is in the product. Added sugars go by a lot of different names like: brown sugar, corn sweetener, corn syrup, dextrose, fructose, glucose, high-fructose corn syrup, honey, invert sugar, lactose, malt syrup, maltose, molasses, raw sugar, sucrose, trehalose, and turbinado sugar.

Added Sugars Add Up:

- 1 Tablespoon of Tomato Ketchup = 12 Calories of Added Sugars
- 1 Cup of Flavored Cereal = 48 Calories of Added Sugars
- 1 Serving of Flavored Yogurt (6 Ounces) = 72 Calories of Added Sugars
- 1 Chocolate Bar (1.6 Ounces) = 74 Calories of Added Sugars
- 1 Bottle of Sports Drink (20 Ounces) = 122 Calories of Added Sugars
- 1 Can of Regular Soda (12 Fluid Ounces) = 126 Calories of Added Sugars
- 1 Piece of Chocolate Cake = 196 Calories of Added Sugars

Make Some Healthy Shifts Replace foods and drinks high in added sugars with healthier options. You could:

- Eat fruit for dessert instead of cookies or cakes
- Swap sugary cereals for unsweetened cereal with fruit
- Drink water or low-fat milk with meals instead of sodas. You can still have foods and drinks with added sugars—just choose smaller portions or have them less often.
- If you choose to have a soda, select a smaller size. • Add 1 teaspoon of sugar to your tea or coffee instead of 2.

**The new Nutrition Facts Label, expected to be used by July 2018, will have a separate count for added sugars rather than just the total amount of sugar (natural and added) in the food.**

From 2015-2020 Dietary Guidelines for Americans Cornell Cooperative Ext. Schenectady County 5/23/17
Spinach Orange Salad

**Ingredients**
- 4 cups fresh spinach, stems removed and torn
- 2 cups orange sections or 1 or 2 11oz cans mandarin oranges
- 1 thinly sliced onion
- 1 tablespoon vegetable oil
- 1 tablespoon vinegar
- 3 tablespoons orange juice
- Salt and pepper to taste

**Directions**
1. In a large bowl, combine spinach, orange sections and onion slices. Toss gently.
2. In a small bowl, combine oil, vinegar and orange juice to make dressing. Mix well.
3. Pour dressing on top of spinach mixture. Add salt and pepper to taste.
4. Toss well and serve. Refrigerate leftovers.

Fruity Banana Smoothie

**Ingredients**
- 1 banana, peeled
- 1 cup vanilla yogurt
- 2 cups sliced peaches
- 2 cups frozen strawberries
- 1 cup nonfat dry milk powder (optional)

**Directions**
1. Mix all ingredients in a blender.
2. Blend until smooth.
3. Serve and enjoy!
4. Refrigerate leftovers.

Garden Sloppy Joes

**Ingredients**
- 1 onion, chopped
- 1 carrot, chopped or shredded
- 1 green pepper, chopped
- 1 pound lean ground meat (15% fat) (turkey, chicken or beef)
- 1 can (8 ounces) tomato sauce
- 1 can (15 ounces) whole tomatoes, crushed
- 1 can (8 ounces) mushrooms or 1/2 pound chopped fresh mushrooms
- 1/4 cup barbecue sauce
- 6 whole wheat buns

**Directions**
1. Sauté onions, carrots, pepper and ground meat in a 2-3 quart saucepan over medium-high heat for 5 minutes.
2. Add tomato sauce, crushed tomatoes, mushrooms and barbecue sauce.
3. Bring to a boil. Reduce heat and simmer for 15 to 20 minutes or until thick, stirring occasionally.