

Give Your Engine The Right Fuel

But Good Nutrition Can Be A Challenge For Seniors

Cars run better with the right fuel in their tank. So do seniors. Eating the right foods fuel them with the protein, vitamins, minerals, fiber and water necessary for better health. However, getting the ideal octane to keep their engine humming may not be easy.

With age, people typically slow down and burn less calories. Their appetite also diminishes. Yet they still must take in the necessary nutrients to maintain good health. And how many nutrients is ideal? The Recommended Daily Allowance (RDA's) categories for seniors are listed for men and for women. There are differences. And many experts feel that the nutritional needs of people in their 50's and 60's differ from those 70 and older. In addition, everyone seems to have an opinion...and a book.

It's easy to get confused (or give up). That's why seniors should work with a doctor or nutritionist they trust to develop a personal nutrition program for their specific situation. And they should not wait until they feel bad to do it.



Seniors need just as many vitamins and minerals as they ever did. But a naturally slower metabolism and illness can affect the absorption of nutrients.

Causes of Poor Nutrition

There are numerous reasons why seniors may have difficulty maintaining a good nutritional regimen. Here is a list of some contributing factors.

- ◆ Loss of appetite.
- ◆ Chewing issues & swallowing problems.
- ◆ Decrease in the sense of taste & smell.
- ◆ Lack of knowledge.
- ◆ Loneliness.
- ◆ Depression.
- ◆ Illness & side effects of medications.
- ◆ Less mobility.
- ◆ Difficult to shop and/or cook.
- ◆ Limited income or frugal spending habits.

Benefits of Good Nutrition

Eating is one of the joys of life. It provides both social and personal benefits. Isn't it great to savor your favorite recipe (cooked to perfection) while in the company of family and friends?

For seniors, the advantages of nutritious meals go beyond taste and companionship. Here's a list of other benefits that affect their daily lives.

- ◆ Raises the energy level.
- ◆ Protects against illness.
- ◆ Helps the body deal with existing illness.
- ◆ Quickens recovery.
- ◆ Keeps medical costs down.
- ◆ Keeps independence up.

(Sources: FDA, Caregiver.com, American Dietetic Assn.)

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