

As You Age ... Basics About An Aging Population

*As You Age: Issue 1: Kathleen M. Stadler and Pamela B. Teaster **

As you age, it is important to understand that our society is aging as well. Between 1870 and 1990, the number of U.S. citizens aged 65 and older grew from 1 million to approximately 32 million. By 2030, the proportion of people over 65 will be 20% of the population.

The first half of our life has many stages (e.g., infant, child, adolescent, young adult, adult), but our society has not recognized stages for the other half of life. Some categories have been suggested, although they are not widely known by the general public. These designations are near aged (ages 55-64), young-old (ages 65-74), old-old (ages 75 - 84), and oldest old (ages 85+).

Source: Moody, H.R. (1998). *Aging: Concepts and controversies*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Pine Forge Press.

Act Your Age By Exploring New Possibilities

Older people are freer to take on new challenges - now more than at any time in history, because there are more services and products geared specifically for them.

They can engage in lifelong learning opportunities in a variety of educational settings, including classes at senior centers, colleges and universities, elder hostels, libraries, on-line classes and through Virginia Cooperative Extension.



What is Their Age Stage?

Draw lines to the right age stage.



John, 74, a retired farmer

Oldest-old



Peggy, 89, charcoal artist

Old-old



Delores, 56, homemaker

Young-old



Frankie, 78, Master Gardener

Near-old

Answers: John, Young-old; Peggy, Oldest-old; Delores, Old-old; Frankie, Near-old

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As You Age...Society's Changes

The number of older adults will exceed the number of children by the year 2030.

More older adults will be living alone, increasing from 10.9% in 2005 to 15.2% in 2020. The number of older adults living alone rises with age.

The aging population will be more diverse, with percentages of Blacks, American Indians, Hispanics, and Asian Americans increasing markedly.

Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census (1990). Census of population: General population characteristics: United States (CP-1-1). Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office.

Recipe for Thought

In later life, generally age 65, you may qualify for government benefits, such as Social Security, Medicare, or Medicaid, which will highly influence your quality of life in old age. The way society regards older adults will significantly affect the way these entitlements are distributed. Our aging society will drive many changes in the way we all live in the 21st century.

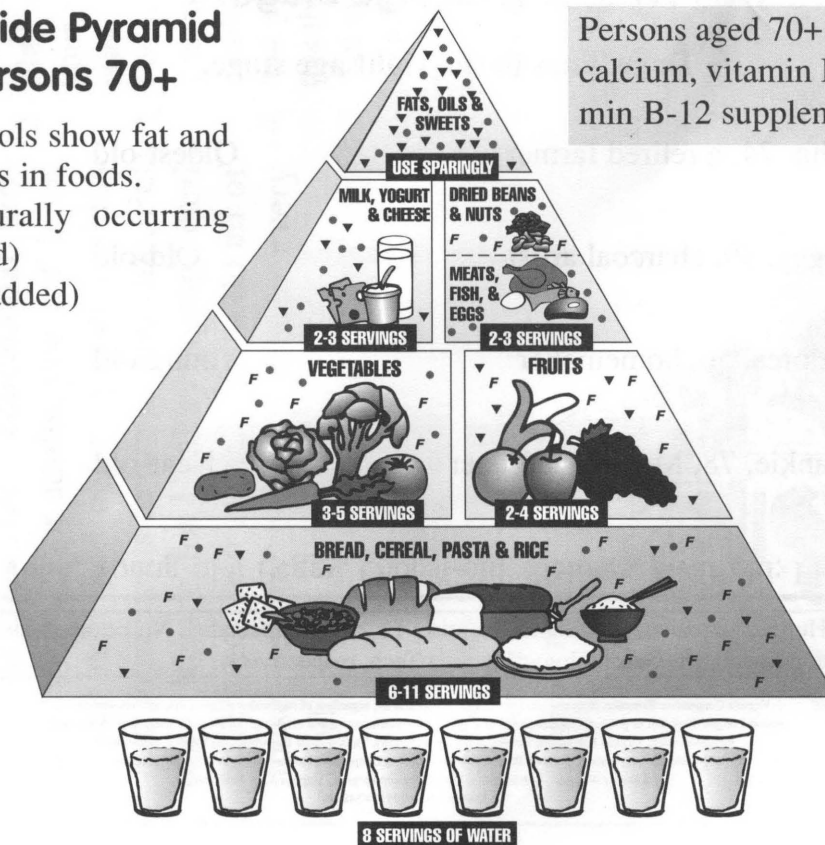
Government Programs for An Aging Society

Program	Eligibility Basis	Benefits	Age
Medicare	Income or purchase	Receive full benefits	65
Medicaid	Income related	Based on need	—
Older Americans Act	Services for aged	Some programs age targeted	—
Social Security	Income based	Receive full benefits	65
Supplemental Social Security	Support for blind and persons with disability	Based on need	65

Food Guide Pyramid for Persons 70+

These symbols show fat and added sugars in foods.

- Fat (naturally occurring and added)
- ▼ Sugars (added)
- F Fiber



Persons aged 70+ may need calcium, vitamin D, or vitamin B-12 supplements.

Recipe for Knowledge about Aging

Ingredients:

A desire to take control of your own aging and health.

Add:

Your increased knowledge about aging can come from major organizations. Try exploring these websites or calling these telephone numbers to learn more about them.

Alzheimer's Association (AA)

Website: <http://www.alz.org/>

American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)

Website: <http://www.aarp.org/>

Phone: 1-800-272-3900

Gray Panthers (GP)

Website: <http://www.graypanthers.org/>

Phone: 1-800-280-5362

National Association of Retired Federal Employees (NARFE)

Website: <http://www.narfe.org/>

Phone: 1-800-627-3394

National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare (NCPSSM)

Website: <http://www.ncpssm.org/>

Phone: 1-800-966-1935

United Seniors Association (USA)

Website: <http://www.unitedseniors.org/>

Phone: 1-800-887-2872

Stir:

Search for these organizations on the web. If you do not know how to use the web, try using Seniors Surf the Web by Virginia Cooperative Extension (VCE) to help older adults use the Internet for communication and information.

Website: <http://www.ext.vt.edu/pubs/nutrition/senior/>

If you do not have internet access, call your local VCE office.

Bake:

Consider joining an organization that is right for you.

Serve:

Become active and encourage your friends to do so!

As You Age ... Recipe for Healthy Aging

As you age, you prepare and select many “ingredients” to live a healthy and active life. As you participate in the “As You Age” educational programs for senior adults, you will learn about new and old preparation skills and ingredients to use in your life. Put this “Recipe for Healthy Aging” card where you can see it. Try to do all of these healthy aging practices every day!

Preparation

1. Select a new topic or area of interest to learn about your own aging. Pursue a creative outlet for your interests.
2. Find resources on aging and become your own expert on a particular aging issue.
3. Learn about health-related changes as you age. Practice healthy physical and mental habits.
4. Ask your friends to participate in activities that you enjoy.
5. Set specific age-related goals and work to achieve them.
6. Encourage other older persons to take up active aging.
7. Communicate with one person each day.

- Carrots, collard greens, kale, & spinach (vegetables contain vitamins, minerals, and phytochemicals).
3. Eat at least 3 servings of calcium-rich foods.

- Choose a variety of calcium-rich foods, such as milk products, yogurt, cheese, greens, broccoli, sardines with bones, or tofu.
- Choose Vitamin D fortified foods, such as fluid milk, dried milk products, and cereals.

4. Eat a protein-rich diet.
 - Choose a variety of fish, lean meats, dairy foods, and dried beans and peas for needed protein. Vitamin B-12 is found in animal proteins.
5. Drink enough fluids.
 - Drink 8 glasses of water, or other fluids (100% fruit juices, beverages, or soup).
 - Drink tea, coffee, and caffeinated sodas in moderation.

Ingredients

1. Eat a variety of nutrient-dense foods from the Food Guide Pyramid.
2. Eat a fiber-rich diet.
 - Choose a variety of whole wheat foods, such as barley, whole wheat bread, cereals, oatmeal, brown rice, or whole wheat pasta to your diet.
 - Choose a variety of colorful fruits as snacks, part of a meal, or as dessert—apples, bananas, pears, peaches, strawberries, & melons (fruits contain vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants).
 - Choose a variety of colorful vegetables, such as broccoli, bell peppers,

Directions

1. Mix the above ingredients together to create colorful meals and snacks. Try to eat smaller, more frequent meals.
2. Share healthy foods with family and friends.
3. Discover new ways to prepare foods to meet age-related changes.

Food Guide Pyramid for Persons 70+

