

As You Age ... Eat More Calcium-Rich Foods

*As You Age: Issue 10: Kathleen M. Stadler and Pamela B. Teaster **

As you age, persons over the age of 70 have unique calorie and nutrient needs. Recently, researchers from Tufts University developed a new Modified Food Guide Pyramid for 70+ Adults. It recommends eating at least three servings of calcium-rich foods to meet the daily requirements of calcium and Vitamin D. After age 50, more calcium or 1,200 milligrams are needed to prevent an age-related bone disorder called osteoporosis. This chronic, progressive disease affects more than 28 million Americans, and about 80% are women.

Calcium and Vitamin D are important to maintaining bone health. As you age, minerals in your bones are lost. Bones may get thinner and break more easily. Protect your bones by choosing calci-

um-rich foods, such as milk, cheese, yogurt, greens, broccoli, sardines, canned salmon with bones, dried beans and peas, and tofu. Also, calcium-fortified foods such as calcium-fortified orange juice.

Vitamin D helps the absorption of calcium. It is found in fortified fluid and dried milk and cereals. Your body can make its own Vitamin D when your skin is exposed to the sunshine. Try to take a walk or sit in the sun for 20-30 minutes, several times a week. This is especially important in the winter when there is less sunlight. Remember to use sunscreen.

Exercise is also needed for good bone health. Take a walk or bike ride with a friend. Do simple leg and arm raises. Perform weight-bearing exercises. Use the stairs instead of the elevator. Stay active!

Reference: Konikoff, R. (March, 1999). A modified food guide for people over 70 years. *Nutrition commentator*, Tufts University.

**Eat 3 servings
of calcium-rich
foods**



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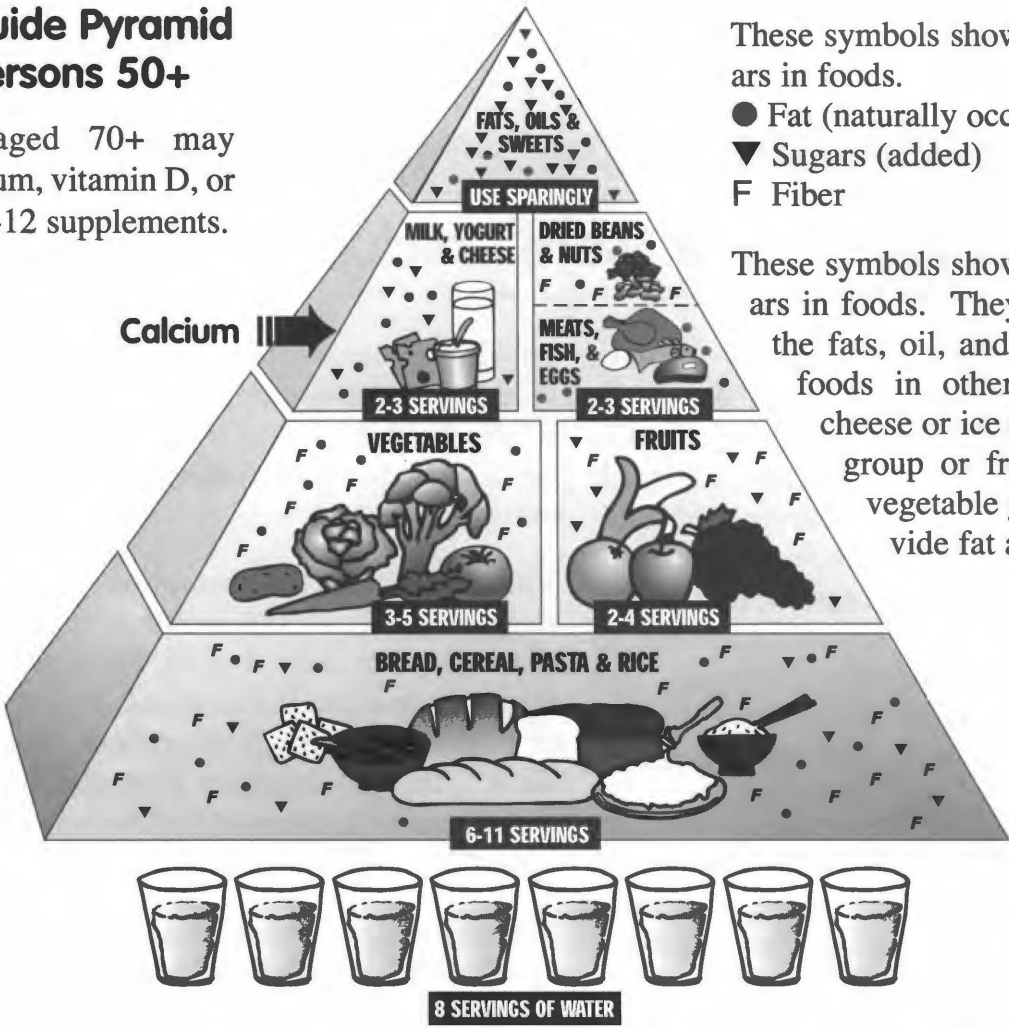
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Food Guide Pyramid for Persons 50+

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



These symbols show fat and added sugars in foods.

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

These symbols show fat and added sugars in foods. They come mostly from the fats, oil, and sweets group. But foods in other groups - such as cheese or ice cream from the milk group or french fries from the vegetable group - can also provide fat and added sugars.

Rate the Calcium-Rich Foods

All of these foods are good sources of calcium. Rate these foods as to which has the most to the least amount of calcium per serving. Write # 1 next to the food with the best amount of calcium, #2 for the second best calcium content, #3 for the third best calcium content, and #4 for the lowest calcium content. Answers at the bottom of the page.

- _____ 1/2 cup cooked collard greens
- _____ 1 cup buttermilk
- _____ 1/2 cup baked beans
- _____ 1 cup yogurt

Color Your Plate

Color your plate with calcium-rich foods. As you age, some older adults cannot digest milk. If you have problems digesting milk, try the following.

- Drink lactose reduced milk,
- Eat yogurt or cheese, where the lactose has been broken down,
- Drink a smaller amount of milk or buttermilk at a time (1/2-1 cup),
- Eat other calcium-rich foods that are not milk-based such as greens, broccoli, almonds, sardines, canned salmon with bones, dried beans and peas, and tofu,
- Eat calcium-fortified foods such as orange juice, cereals, and breads.

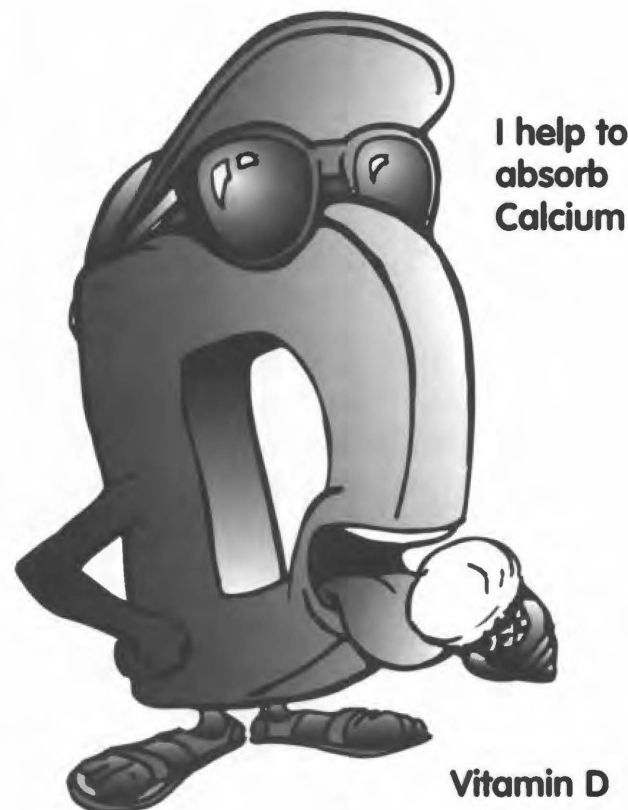
Consult a doctor or dietitian, if you need a dietary supplement such as calcium carbonate or calcium citrate.

Answers: #1 Yogurt, #2 Buttermilk, #3 Baked Beans, & #4 Greens

As You Age ... Older Women

- Of the 33 million people aged 65 and older, 19.7 million or 59% are women.
- For persons ages 65–69 there are 81 men for every 100 women; for those over age 85, there are 39 men for every 100 women.
- Improved survival to oldest-old ages is the most important factor in the growth of the older age group. Life expectancy for women is 78.7 years; for men it is 72.0 years.
- Gender differences in life expectancy cause a high rate of widowhood and living alone for older females.
- Older women's health tends to be characterized by more chronic diseases than that of older men.

Source: Stecknerider, J.S. (1998). Aging as a female phenomenon: The plight of older women. In J.S. Stecknerider & T.M. Parrott (Eds.). *New directions in old-age policies* (pp. 235–260). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

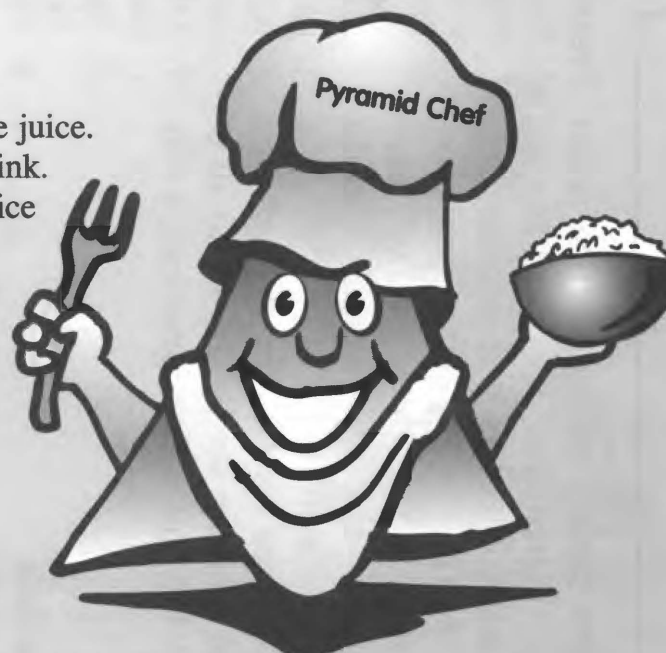


Snacking with Pyramid Chef

Small meals and snacks throughout the day are common for older adults with smaller appetites. Circle the good calcium-rich snack choices for your lifestyle and health. Invite a friend over for a calcium-rich snack and chat!

- Cheese slices with a fruit cup.
- Graham crackers with buttermilk.
- Whole wheat bagel with calcium fortified orange juice.
- Blended strawberries and ice cream smoothie drink.
- Mixed fruit with lemon yogurt served in an ice cream cone.
- Spinach dip (chopped spinach mixed in blended cottage cheese with favorite herbs) served with vegetables.
- Canned salmon sandwich spread with herbs and mayonnaise served on rye bread.
- Cooked greens with corn bread.

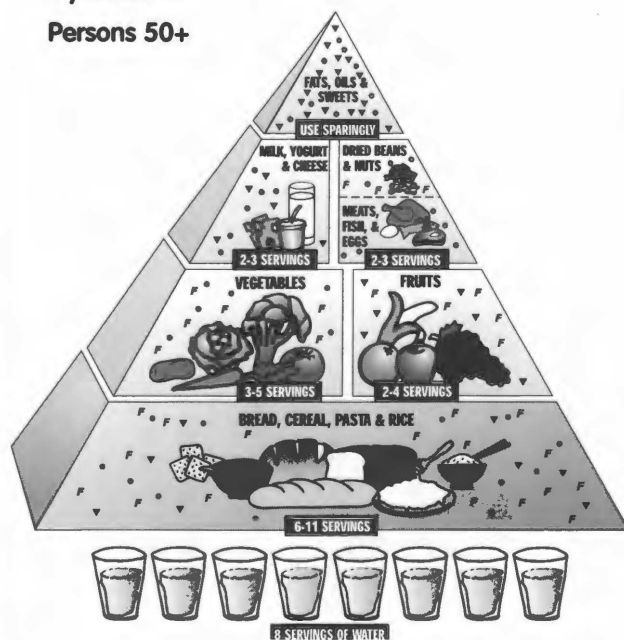
Name your favorite calcium-rich snack or meal.



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!

**Food Guide
Pyramid for
Persons 50+**



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.

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,

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.

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.