Virginia Cooperative Extension

Human Nutrition, Foods and Exercise

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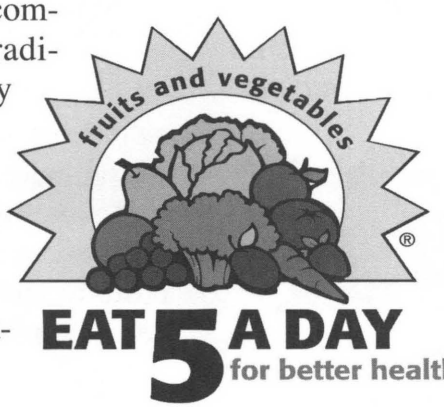
As You Age ... Eat More Fruits with Antioxidants & Vitamin C

*As You Age: Issue 7: Kathleen M. Stadler and Pamela B. Teaster **

As you age, eating a variety of fruits helps you to get enough fiber, vitamins, and antioxidants into your diet. Vitamin C, beta carotene (Vitamin A), and Vitamin E are antioxidants found in foods. Antioxidant vitamins act as little warriors to defend your body against cell damage caused by unstable oxygen compounds (free radicals). This may prevent cataract formation, hypertension, diverticulosis, obesity, diabetes, and premature aging.



The National Cancer Institute developed the "5 A Day" program to encourage Americans to eat at least five servings of fruits and vegetables each day. Eat at least two servings of fruits and at least three servings of vegetables every day.

One serving size is:

1 medium fruit
1/2 cup fresh, cooked, or canned fruit
3/4 cup (6 oz.) of 100% fruit juice
1/4 cup dried fruit

Sources:
Produce for Better Health Foundation. (1999). Year 2000 dietary guidelines: The case for fruits and vegetables first. Wilmington, DE: Author.

World Cancer Research Fund, American Institute for Cancer Research. (1997) Food, Nutrition and the Prevention of Cancer: a Global Perspective. Washington DC: American Institutes for Cancer Research.

"I am an antioxidant. I help to heal wounds, resist infections, & absorb iron from foods. Citrus fruits—oranges, lemons, limes, & grapefruits—have a lot of me. Eat the skins, membranes, and seeds of fruit for fiber."

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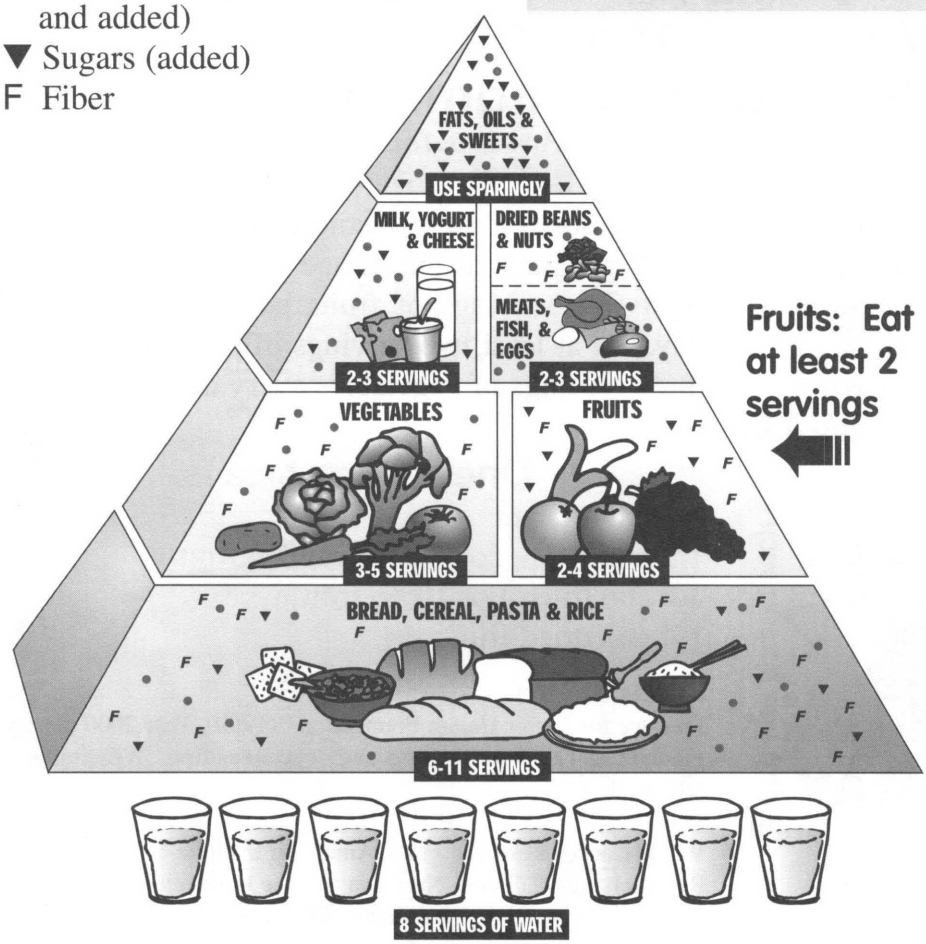
VIRGINIA STATE UNIVERSITY

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.



As You Age ... Legal Information

The National Association of Elder Law Attorneys (NELA) provides referrals to attorneys specializing in legal problems of elderly people.

Approximately 60% of all health-related consumer fraud and 30% of all white-collar crime victims are older adults.*

Virginia has ten programs that provide public guardianship for indigent adults. Adult guardianship usually concerns older people.

Grandparents or other relatives raising grandchildren or kin are experiencing greater visibility through recent court decisions on custody and visitation rights as well as financial support.

* Source: U.S. House Select Committee on Aging. (1984). Quackery: A $10 billion scandal (Comm. Publication No. 98-435). Washington, DC: Government Printing Office.

Color Your Plate

If you don't like to cook:

- Choose a variety of fresh, canned, frozen, and dried fruits.
- Eat canned fruits packed in natural juices or light syrup.
- Drink 100% fruit juices. Read the nutrition label. The type of juice (apple, orange, or tomato) should be listed as the first ingredient. Avoid fruit drinks or cocktail drinks with high fructose or sucrose (sugar) water as the first ingredient.
- Buy seasonal produce, store specials, or at farmer's markets to cut costs.

Eating fruit:

- Helps you resist infections (Vitamin C).
- Gives you fiber for a regular digestive function.
- Cleans your teeth—"nature's toothbrush."
- Gives you a fast healthy food with antioxidants.

If You See It, You Will Eat It!

If you don't like to cook, fruit snacks and fruit meals are easy to make. Create your own colorful fruit dish. Start with fresh fruit; add canned, dried, or frozen fruits; next add a binding agent such as yogurt, pudding, mayonnaise, salad dressing, or natural juices; and serve with your favorite whole grain bread or crackers. The amount of each ingredient of the following recipes will depend on the size of your appetite or the number of people eating the dish.

Yogurt Fruit Salad

Mix fresh tangerine and apple slices with canned pears (drain juice). Mix with vanilla yogurt. Add raisins on top. Serve with favorite whole-wheat crackers or bread.

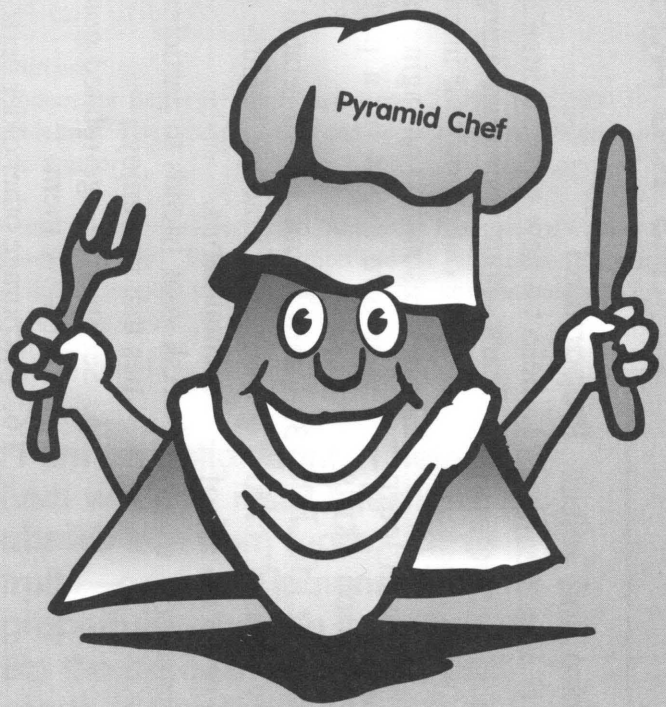
Chicken Grape Salad

Mix canned boneless chicken with canned grapes (drain juice). Mix with 1-2 tablespoons of low-fat mayonnaise. Add flavor with onion, garlic, or mint. Serve in a whole-wheat pita or on bread.

Create a Mix and Match Fruit Salad

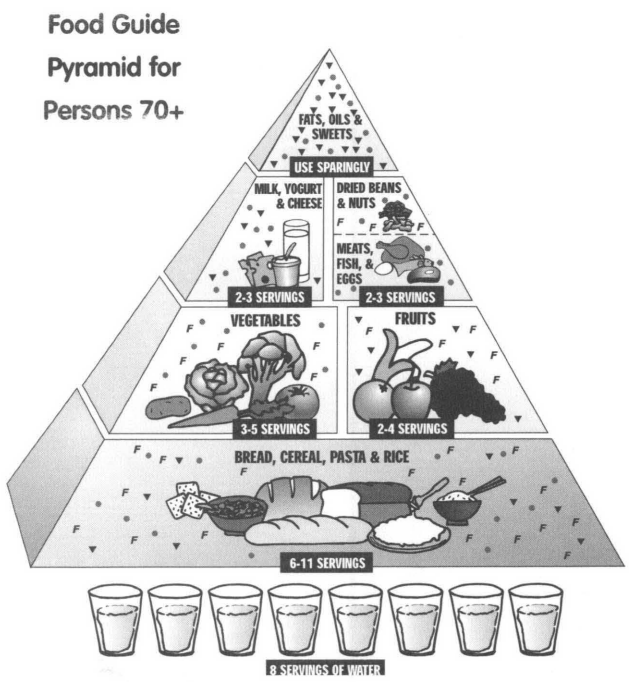
Fill in the blanks with your favorite foods. Use a variety of colors to get a variety of antioxidants.

Fresh Fruit:_____
+
Canned Fruit:_____
+
Binding Agent:_____
+
Served With:_____



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.

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.