



Good nutrition is important at every age. As you get older, it's especially important to make the most of mealtime. Nutrient-rich foods help maintain your muscles and bones, sustain your energy and fortify you against infections and illness.

## What to eat for your best health

### Cover all the bases:

Try to eat at least the minimum number of servings from all of the food groups each day:

- ▶ Protein foods (6 ounces minimum per day)
- ▶ Dairy foods (3 cups per day)
- ▶ Vegetables (2½ cups per day)
- ▶ Grain products (6 ounces per day)
- ▶ Fruits (2 cups per day)

### Include protein in every meal:

Ideally, include 3 to 4 ounces of protein (20 to 30 grams) in every meal. For example:

- ▶ Breakfast: ½ cup oatmeal with 1 cup milk and 2 tablespoons almonds = 20 grams protein
- ▶ Lunch: Open-faced turkey sandwich and 1 cup yogurt with fruit = 29 grams protein
- ▶ Dinner: A chicken breast with carrots and ½ cup quinoa = 23 grams protein

### Learn more about what to eat:

- ▶ See [bit.ly/SUANutrition](http://bit.ly/SUANutrition) for more *Protein Pointers*. Good sources of protein are: lean meat, chicken, fish, milk, cheese, yogurt, beans, peas, tofu, nuts and seeds.
- ▶ Use the Super Tracker and other tools at [www.choosemyplate.gov](http://www.choosemyplate.gov) to help you plan your meals.
- ▶ See [www.choosemyplate.gov/choosing-healthy-meals-you-get-older](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/choosing-healthy-meals-you-get-older) for *10 Healthy Eating Tips for People Age 65+*.

### Beware of malnutrition

Malnutrition can happen at any body size or weight – even in obese adults – and can have a serious impact on your health. You can become malnourished over time if you don't eat enough protein, and enough food in general.

Ask your doctor or dietitian about malnutrition if:

- You have recently lost weight without trying
- You've lost your appetite lately
- You're unable to eat or are only able to eat small amounts
- You're feeling weak or tired
- You have problems with swelling or fluid accumulation

For more information about malnutrition, see *Eating to Meet Your Body's Needs* at [bit.ly/SUANutrition](http://bit.ly/SUANutrition).

## *Eat better by sharing meals*

Adults who share meals have:

- ▶ More balanced diets, including more fruits, vegetables, whole grains protein and dairy foods
- ▶ Improved mental and social health
- ▶ Less obesity
- ▶ Lower risk of malnutrition

Five easy ways to share meals:

1. Eat with people near you, such as neighbors, friends and family members.
2. Join or start a cooking club or community kitchen.
3. Keep it easy and low cost. Ask others to bring what they can. Make it a potluck.
4. Join or start a dining-out group.
5. Go to meals at your local senior center.

If you have any questions about what to eat, how to eat or whether you are eating enough, ask your doctor for a referral to a registered dietitian.

This information is for general educational purposes only – always follow your doctor’s recommendations, and check with your doctor if you have any questions.



**Cook Together. Eat Together. Talk Together. Make Mealtime a Shared Time.**