

Aging Healthfully Newsletter

Illinois Department on Aging



Celebrate the National Senior Nutrition Program

March is National Nutrition Month® and it is the perfect time to celebrate the National Senior Nutrition Program!

National Nutrition Month® came about in 1973, originally as “National Nutrition Week” and soon became a month-long observance as of 1980. **The purpose is to motivate people to make healthful, informed food choices, and develop sound eating and exercise habits. This year’s theme is *Personalize Your Plate*.**

There is no single healthy eating pattern that works for everyone. The best approach to following a healthy dietary pattern is to customize your food and beverage choices to reflect your personal and cultural preferences while taking into consideration your budget.

Here Are 10 Tips to Help You *Personalize Your Plate*

1. Eat a variety of nutritious foods and beverages every day.
2. Plan out your meals, snacks, and physical activity for the week, so you are more likely to make healthy choices.
3. Try new recipes and learn new skills to create easy and tasty meals on a budget!
4. Speak with a Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (or ask your doctor for a referral to meet with one virtually) to see what you can do to improve your eating patterns and health!
5. Go meatless one day a week by including plant-based proteins such as beans, lentils, and soy-based products in your diet instead of animal proteins.
6. Cook with vegetable oils instead of solid fats to reduce the amount of saturated fat in your diet.
7. Cook with a variety of spices, herbs, and salt-free seasonings to add flavor to your meals without adding salt.
8. Choose more whole grains such as wild rice, brown rice, and whole-wheat pasta to get a healthy dose of fiber and vitamins in your diet.
9. Add ground flaxseed to your smoothies and oatmeal for heart healthy fats and fiber.
10. Add a splash of lime, citrus, or pineapple juice to your water for added flavor.

During the month of March, we encourage you to celebrate the history, value, and importance of the Senior Nutrition Program.

The National Senior Nutrition Program began in 1972 and is funded by the Older Americans Act. The Senior Nutrition Program has been improving the nutritional status, health and wellbeing, and providing socialization to Older Americans for almost 50 years!



The Administration for Community Living (ACL) funds senior nutrition services, including home-delivered meals and meals served in group settings (i.e. Congregate settings).

- **The Congregate Nutrition Program was established in 1972 and provides nutritionally balanced meals to older adults in a congregate setting.** Meals provided must meet the Dietary Reference Intakes for older adults and follow the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
 - In addition, the Congregate Nutrition Program provides many opportunities for socialization as well as health and wellness activities.
- **The Home-Delivered Nutrition Program was established in 1978 and provides nutritionally balanced meals to older adults that are home-bound.** Meals provided must meet the Dietary Reference Intakes for older adults and follow the most recent Dietary Guidelines for Americans.
 - This program provides an informal “safety check” for older adults, in which volunteers and paid meal delivery staff can help to decrease feelings of loneliness and isolation in older adults as they may be the only regular social interaction they have.

Studies show meal programs have a positive impact on older adults' health and well-being.



#SeniorNutritionProgram

Attachments:

- Senior Nutrition Program – Activity Submission Form Release
- Senior Nutrition Program Crack the Code
- Crack the Code Word Sheet
- Senior Nutrition Program – Guided Imagery Relaxation
- Senior Nutrition Program – Nutritional Activity
- Senior Nutrition Program – Text Challenge
- 20 Health Tips 2021 NNM ®
- 2021 NNM ® Sudoku (easy)
- 2021 NNM ® Sudoku (difficult)
- 2021 NNM ® Word Search
- 2021 NNM ® Crossword
- 2021 NNM ® Quiz
- **Recipes:** Peppermint Smoothie; Skillet Green Beans with Lemon & Horseradish

References:

<https://acl.gov/SeniorNutrition/CommunityKit>

<https://acl.gov/SeniorNutrition>

https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/news%202017-03/OAA-Nutrition_Programs_Fact_Sheet.pdf

Illinois Department on Aging
One Natural Resources Way, Suite 100
Springfield, IL 62702

<https://www2.illinois.gov/aging/programs/nutrition/Pages/nutrition.aspx>