

# 10 tips

Nutrition Education Series

# add more vegetables to your day



## 10 tips to help you eat more vegetables

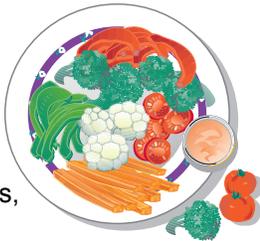
**It's easy to eat more vegetables!** Eating vegetables is important because they provide vitamins and minerals and most are low in calories. To fit more vegetables in your meals, follow these simple tips. It is easier than you may think.

### 1 discover fast ways to cook

Cook fresh or frozen vegetables in the microwave for a quick-and-easy dish to add to any meal. Steam green beans, carrots, or broccoli in a bowl with a small amount of water in the microwave for a quick side dish.

### 2 be ahead of the game

Cut up a batch of bell peppers, carrots, or broccoli. Pre-package them to use when time is limited. You can enjoy them on a salad, with hummus, or in a veggie wrap.



### 3 choose vegetables rich in color

Brighten your plate with vegetables that are red, orange, or dark green. They are full of vitamins and minerals. Try acorn squash, cherry tomatoes, sweet potatoes, or collard greens. They not only taste great but also are good for you, too.

### 4 check the freezer aisle

Frozen vegetables are quick and easy to use and are just as nutritious as fresh veggies. Try adding frozen corn, peas, green beans, spinach, or sugar snap peas to some of your favorite dishes or eat as a side dish.

### 5 stock up on veggies

Canned vegetables are a great addition to any meal, so keep on hand canned tomatoes, kidney beans, garbanzo beans, mushrooms, and beets. Select those labeled as "reduced sodium," "low sodium," or "no salt added."



### 6 make your garden salad glow with color

Brighten your salad by using colorful vegetables such as black beans, sliced red bell peppers, shredded radishes, chopped red cabbage, or watercress. Your salad will not only look good but taste good, too.



### 7 sip on some vegetable soup

Heat it and eat it. Try tomato, butternut squash, or garden vegetable soup. Look for reduced- or low-sodium soups.

### 8 while you're out

If dinner is away from home, no need to worry. When ordering, ask for an extra side of vegetables or side salad instead of the typical fried side dish.

### 9 savor the flavor of seasonal vegetables

Buy vegetables that are in season for maximum flavor at a lower cost. Check your local supermarket specials for the best-in-season buys. Or visit your local farmer's market.



### 10 try something new

You never know what you may like. Choose a new vegetable—add it to your recipe or look up how to fix it online.

# 10 tips

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# be active adults

10 tips to help adults include  
physical activity into their lifestyle



**Being physically active is important for your health.** Adults who are physically active are less likely to develop some chronic diseases than adults who are inactive. Physical activity is any form of exercise or movement of the body that uses energy. People of all ages, shapes, sizes, and abilities can benefit from a physically active lifestyle.

## 1 start activities slowly and build up over time

If you are just starting physical activity, build up slowly. This will help to prevent injury. After a few weeks, increase how often and how long you are active.



## 2 get your heart pumping

For health benefits, do at least 2½ hours each week of physical activity that requires moderate effort. A few examples include brisk walking, biking, swimming, and skating. Spread activities over the week, but do them at least 10 minutes at a time.



## 3 strength-train for healthy muscles and bones

Do strengthening activities twice a week. Activities that build strength include lifting weights, doing push-ups and sit-ups, working with resistance bands, or heavy gardening.

## 4 make active choices throughout the day

Every little bit of activity can add up and doing something is better than nothing. Take the stairs instead of the elevator, go for a 10-minute walk on your lunch break, or park further away from work and walk.

## 5 be active your way

Mix it up—there are endless ways to be active. They include walking, biking, dancing, martial arts, gardening, and playing ball. Try out different activities to see what you like best and to add variety.

## 6 use the buddy system

Activities with friends or family are more enjoyable than doing them alone. Join a walking group, attend fitness classes at a gym, or play with the kids outside. Build a support network—your buddies will encourage you to keep being active.



## 7 set goals and track your progress

Plan your physical activity ahead of time and keep records. It's a great way to meet your goals. Track your activities with the Physical Activity Tracker on **SuperTracker**.\* Use the My Journal feature to record what you enjoyed so you can build a plan that is right for you.

## 8 add on to your active time

Once you get used to regular physical activity, try to increase your weekly active time. The more time you spend being physically active, the more health benefits you will receive.

## 9 increase your effort

Add more intense activities once you have been moderately active for a while. You can do this by turning a brisk walk into a jog, swimming or biking faster, playing soccer, and participating in aerobic dance.



## 10 have fun!

Physical activity shouldn't be a chore. It can help you feel better about yourself and the way you live your life. Choose activities that you enjoy and that fit your lifestyle.

\*Find the SuperTracker at <https://www.supertracker.usda.gov>.

# 10 tips

# be food safe

Nutrition  
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**10 tips** to reduce the risk of foodborne illness



**A critical part of healthy eating is keeping foods safe.** Individuals in their own homes can reduce contaminants and keep food safe to eat by following safe food handling practices. Four basic food safety principles work together to reduce the risk of foodborne illness—**Clean, Separate, Cook, and Chill**. These four principles are the cornerstones of Fight BAC!<sup>®</sup>, a national public education campaign to promote food safety to consumers and educate them on how to handle and prepare food safely.

## CLEAN

### 1 wash hands with soap and water

Wet hands with clean running water and apply soap. Use warm water if it is available. Rub hands together to make a lather and scrub all parts of the hand for 20 seconds. Rinse hands thoroughly and dry using a clean paper towel. If possible, use a paper towel to turn off the faucet.

### 2 sanitize surfaces

Surfaces should be washed with hot, soapy water. A solution of 1 tablespoon of unscented, liquid chlorine bleach per gallon of water can be used to sanitize surfaces.

### 3 clean sweep refrigerated foods once a week

At least once a week, throw out refrigerated foods that should no longer be eaten. Cooked leftovers should be discarded after 4 days; raw poultry and ground meats, 1 to 2 days.

### 4 keep appliances clean

Clean the inside and the outside of appliances. Pay particular attention to buttons and handles where cross-contamination to hands can occur.

### 5 rinse produce

Rinse fresh vegetables and fruits under running water just before eating, cutting, or cooking. Even if you plan to peel or cut the produce before eating, it is important to thoroughly rinse it first to prevent microbes from transferring from the outside to the inside of the produce.



## SEPARATE

### 6 separate foods when shopping

Place raw seafood, meat, and poultry in plastic bags. Store them below ready-to-eat foods in your refrigerator.

### 7 separate foods when preparing and serving

Always use a clean cutting board for fresh produce and a separate one for raw seafood, meat, and poultry. Never place cooked food back on the same plate or cutting board that previously held raw food.

## COOK AND CHILL

### 8 use a food thermometer when cooking

A food thermometer should be used to ensure that food is safely cooked and that cooked food is held at safe temperatures until eaten.



### 9 cook food to safe internal temperatures

One effective way to prevent illness is to check the internal temperature of seafood, meat, poultry, and egg dishes. Cook all raw beef, pork, lamb, and veal steaks, chops, and roasts to a safe minimum internal temperature of 145 °F. For safety and quality, allow meat to rest for at least 3 minutes before carving or eating. Cook all raw ground beef, pork, lamb, and veal to an internal temperature of 160 °F. Cook all poultry, including ground turkey and chicken, to an internal temperature of 165 °F ([www.isitdoneyet.gov](http://www.isitdoneyet.gov)).

### 10 keep foods at safe temperatures

Hold cold foods at 40 °F or below. Keep hot foods at 140 °F or above. Foods are no longer safe to eat when they have been in the danger zone between 40-140 °F for more than 2 hours (1 hour if the temperature was above 90 °F).

# 10 tips

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# build a healthy meal

## 10 tips for healthy meals



**A healthy meal starts with more vegetables and fruits and smaller portions of protein and grains.** Think about how you can adjust the portions on your plate to get more of what you need without too many calories. And don't forget dairy—make it the beverage with your meal or add fat-free or low-fat dairy products to your plate.

### 1 make half your plate veggies and fruits

Vegetables and fruits are full of nutrients and may help to promote good health. Choose red, orange, and dark-green vegetables such as tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli.



### 2 add lean protein

Choose protein foods, such as lean beef and pork, or chicken, turkey, beans, or tofu. Twice a week, make seafood the protein on your plate.

### 3 include whole grains

Aim to make at least half your grains whole grains. Look for the words "100% whole grain" or "100% whole wheat" on the food label. Whole grains provide more nutrients, like fiber, than refined grains.

### 4 don't forget the dairy

Pair your meal with a cup of fat-free or low-fat milk. They provide the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but less fat and calories. Don't drink milk? Try soy milk (soy beverage) as your beverage or include fat-free or low-fat yogurt in your meal.



### 5 avoid extra fat

Using heavy gravies or sauces will add fat and calories to otherwise healthy choices. For example, steamed broccoli is great, but avoid topping it with cheese sauce. Try other options, like a sprinkling of low-fat parmesan cheese or a squeeze of lemon.

### 6 take your time

Savor your food. Eat slowly, enjoy the taste and textures, and pay attention to how you feel. Be mindful. Eating very quickly may cause you to eat too much.

### 7 use a smaller plate

Use a smaller plate at meals to help with portion control. That way you can finish your entire plate and feel satisfied without overeating.

### 8 take control of your food

Eat at home more often so you know exactly what you are eating. If you eat out, check and compare the nutrition information. Choose healthier options such as baked instead of fried.

### 9 try new foods

Keep it interesting by picking out new foods you've never tried before, like mango, lentils, or kale. You may find a new favorite! Trade fun and tasty recipes with friends or find them online.



### 10 satisfy your sweet tooth in a healthy way

Indulge in a naturally sweet dessert dish—fruit! Serve a fresh fruit cocktail or a fruit parfait made with yogurt. For a hot dessert, bake apples and top with cinnamon.

# 10 tips

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# choose MyPlate

## 10 tips to a great plate



### Making food choices for a healthy lifestyle can be as simple as using these 10 Tips.

Use the ideas in this list to *balance your calories*, to choose foods to *eat more often*, and to cut back on foods to *eat less often*.

#### 1 balance calories

Find out how many calories YOU need for a day as a first step in managing your weight. Go to [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov) to find your calorie level. Being physically active also helps you balance calories.

#### 2 enjoy your food, but eat less

Take the time to fully enjoy your food as you eat it. Eating too fast or when your attention is elsewhere may lead to eating too many calories. Pay attention to hunger and fullness cues before, during, and after meals. Use them to recognize when to eat and when you've had enough.



#### 3 avoid oversized portions

Use a smaller plate, bowl, and glass. Portion out foods before you eat. When eating out, choose a smaller size option, share a dish, or take home part of your meal.

#### 4 foods to eat more often

Eat more vegetables, fruits, whole grains, and fat-free or 1% milk and dairy products. These foods have the nutrients you need for health—including potassium, calcium, vitamin D, and fiber. Make them the basis for meals and snacks.



#### 5 make half your plate fruits and vegetables

Choose red, orange, and dark-green vegetables like tomatoes, sweet potatoes, and broccoli, along with other vegetables for your meals. Add fruit to meals as part of main or side dishes or as dessert.

#### 6 switch to fat-free or low-fat (1%) milk

They have the same amount of calcium and other essential nutrients as whole milk, but fewer calories and less saturated fat.



#### 7 make half your grains whole grains

To eat more whole grains, substitute a whole-grain product for a refined product—such as eating whole-wheat bread instead of white bread or brown rice instead of white rice.

#### 8 foods to eat less often

Cut back on foods high in solid fats, added sugars, and salt. They include cakes, cookies, ice cream, candies, sweetened drinks, pizza, and fatty meats like ribs, sausages, bacon, and hot dogs. Use these foods as occasional treats, not everyday foods.

#### 9 compare sodium in foods

Use the Nutrition Facts label to choose lower sodium versions of foods like soup, bread, and frozen meals. Select canned foods labeled “low sodium,” “reduced sodium,” or “no salt added.”



#### 10 drink water instead of sugary drinks

Cut calories by drinking water or unsweetened beverages. Soda, energy drinks, and sports drinks are a major source of added sugar, and calories, in American diets.

# 10 tips

Nutrition  
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# focus on fruits

## 10 tips to help you eat more fruits



**Eating fruit provides health benefits.** People who eat more vegetables and fruits as part of an overall healthy diet are likely to have a reduced risk of some chronic diseases. Fruits provide nutrients vital for health, such as potassium, dietary fiber, vitamin C, and folate (folic acid). Most fruits are naturally low in fat, sodium, and calories. None have cholesterol. Any fruit or 100% fruit juice counts as a part of the Fruit Group. Fruits may be fresh, canned, frozen, or dried, and may be whole, cut-up, or pureed.

### 1 keep visible reminders

Keep a bowl of whole fruit on the table, counter, or in the refrigerator.



### 2 think about taste

Buy fresh fruits in season when they may be less expensive and at their peak flavor. Add fruits to sweeten a recipe.



### 3 think about variety

Buy fruits that are dried, frozen, and canned (in water or 100% juice) as well as fresh, so that you always have a supply on hand.

### 4 don't forget the fiber

Make most of your choices whole or cut-up fruit, rather than juice, for the benefits that dietary fiber provides.



### 5 be a good role model

Set a good example for children by eating fruit every day with meals or as snacks.

### 6 include fruit at breakfast

At breakfast, top your cereal with bananas, peaches, or strawberries; add blueberries to pancakes; drink 100% orange or grapefruit juice. Or, try a fruit mixed with fat-free or low-fat yogurt.



### 7 try fruit at lunch

At lunch, pack a tangerine, banana, or grapes to eat, or choose fruits from a salad bar. Individual containers of fruits like peaches or applesauce are easy and convenient.

### 8 experiment with fruit at dinner, too

At dinner, add crushed pineapple to coleslaw, or include orange sections, dried cranberries, or grapes in a tossed salad.

### 9 snack on fruits

Dried fruits make great snacks. They are easy to carry and store well.



### 10 keep fruits safe

Rinse fruits before preparing or eating them. Under clean, running water, rub fruits briskly to remove dirt and surface microorganisms. After rinsing, dry with a clean towel.



# 10 tips

Nutrition Education Series

# got your dairy today?

## 10 tips to help you eat and drink more fat-free or low-fat dairy foods



**The Dairy Group includes milk, yogurt, cheese, and fortified soymilk.** They provide calcium, vitamin D, potassium, protein, and other nutrients needed for good health throughout life. Choices should be low-fat or fat-free—to cut calories and saturated fat. How much is needed? Older children, teens, and adults need 3 cups\* a day, while children 4 to 8 years old need 2½ cups, and children 2 to 3 years old need 2 cups.

### 1 “skim” the fat

Drink fat-free (skim) or low-fat (1%) milk. If you currently drink whole milk, gradually switch to lower fat versions. This change cuts calories but doesn't reduce calcium or other essential nutrients.

### 2 boost potassium and vitamin D, and cut sodium

Choose fat-free or low-fat milk or yogurt more often than cheese. Milk and yogurt have more potassium and less sodium than most cheeses. Also, almost all milk and many yogurts are fortified with vitamin D.



### 3 top off your meals



Use fat-free or low-fat milk on cereal and oatmeal. Top fruit salads and baked potatoes with low-fat yogurt instead of higher fat toppings such as sour cream.

### 4 choose cheeses with less fat

Many cheeses are high in saturated fat. Look for “reduced-fat” or “low-fat” on the label. Try different brands or types to find the one that you like.

### 5 what about cream cheese?

Regular cream cheese, cream, and butter **are not** part of the dairy food group. They are high in saturated fat and have little or no calcium.

\* What counts as a cup in the Dairy Group? 1 cup of milk or yogurt, 1½ ounces of natural cheese, or 2 ounces of processed cheese.

### 6 ingredient switches

When recipes such as dips call for sour cream, substitute plain yogurt. Use fat-free evaporated milk instead of cream, and try ricotta cheese as a substitute for cream cheese.

### 7 choose sweet dairy foods with care

Flavored milks, fruit yogurts, frozen yogurt, and puddings can contain a lot of added sugars. These added sugars are empty calories. You need the nutrients in dairy foods—not these empty calories.

### 8 caffeinating?

If so, get your calcium along with your morning caffeine boost. Make or order coffee, a latte, or cappuccino with fat-free or low-fat milk.

### 9 can't drink milk?

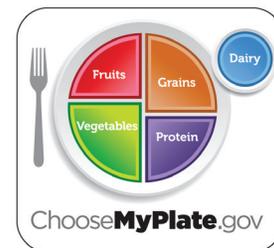
If you are lactose intolerant, try lactose-free milk, drink smaller amounts of milk at a time, or try soymilk (soy beverage). Check the Nutrition Facts label to be sure your soymilk has about 300 mg of calcium. Calcium in some leafy greens is well absorbed, but eating several cups each day to meet calcium needs may be unrealistic.

### 10 take care of yourself and your family

Parents who drink milk and eat dairy foods show their kids that it is important. Dairy foods are especially important to build the growing bones of kids and teens. Routinely include low-fat or fat-free dairy foods with meals and snacks—for everyone's benefit.



# make half your grains whole



## 10 tips to help you eat whole grains

**Any food made from wheat, rice, oats, cornmeal, barley, or another cereal grain is a grain product.** Bread, pasta, oatmeal, breakfast cereals, tortillas, and grits are examples. Grains are divided into two subgroups, **whole grains** and **refined grains**. Whole grains contain the entire grain kernel—the bran, germ, and endosperm. People who eat whole grains as part of a healthy diet have a reduced risk of some chronic diseases.

### 1 make simple switches

To make half your grains whole grains, substitute a whole-grain product for a refined-grain product. For example, eat 100% whole-wheat bread or bagels instead of white bread or bagels, or brown rice instead of white rice.



### 2 whole grains can be healthy snacks

Popcorn, a whole grain, can be a healthy snack. Make it with little or no added salt or butter. Also, try 100% whole-wheat or rye crackers.



### 3 save some time

Cook extra bulgur or barley when you have time. Freeze half to heat and serve later as a quick side dish.

### 4 mix it up with whole grains

Use whole grains in mixed dishes, such as barley in vegetable soups or stews and bulgur wheat in casseroles or stir-fries. Try a quinoa salad or pilaf.

### 5 try whole-wheat versions

For a change, try brown rice or whole-wheat pasta. Try brown rice stuffing in baked green peppers or tomatoes, and whole-wheat macaroni in macaroni and cheese.



### 6 bake up some whole-grain goodness

Experiment by substituting buckwheat, millet, or oat flour for up to half of the flour in pancake, waffle, muffin, or other flour-based recipes. They may need a bit more leavening in order to rise.

### 7 be a good role model for children

Set a good example for children by serving and eating whole grains every day with meals or as snacks.

### 8 check the label for fiber

Use the Nutrition Facts label to check the fiber content of whole-grain foods. Good sources of fiber contain 10% to 19% of the Daily Value; excellent sources contain 20% or more.



### 9 know what to look for on the ingredients list

Read the ingredients list and choose products that name a whole-grain ingredient **first** on the list. Look for “whole wheat,” “brown rice,” “bulgur,” “buckwheat,” “oatmeal,” “whole-grain cornmeal,” “whole oats,” “whole rye,” or “wild rice.”

### 10 be a smart shopper

The color of a food is not an indication that it is a whole-grain food. Foods labeled as “multi-grain,” “stone-ground,” “100% wheat,” “cracked wheat,” “seven-grain,” or “bran” are usually not 100% whole-grain products, and may not contain **any** whole grain.





United States Department of Agriculture

# ***Eat Smart, Live Strong***

## **Nutrition Education for Older Adults**



# **Leader's Guide**

This guide explains what the *Eat Smart, Live Strong* activities are designed to accomplish and how they work.

Sessions

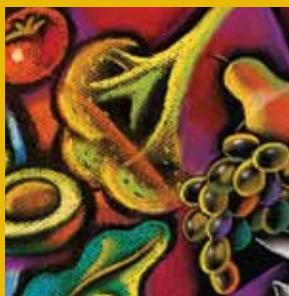
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# Leader's Guide Welcome!



Welcome to the *Eat Smart, Live Strong* Activity Kit. By using these four fun, interactive sessions, you can help low-income older adults adopt **two key behaviors** that will improve their health and quality of life:

- 1 Eat at least 3½ cups of fruits and vegetables every day<sup>1</sup>  
(1½ cups of fruits and 2 cups of vegetables)
- 2 Participate in at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week

This introductory guide explains what the kit activities are designed to accomplish – and why they work.

## *Eat Smart, Live Strong* Will Make a Difference!

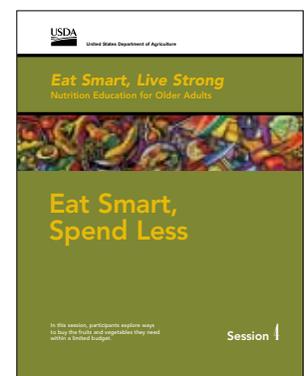
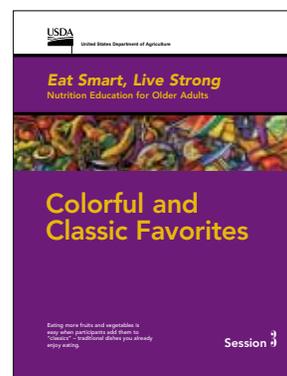
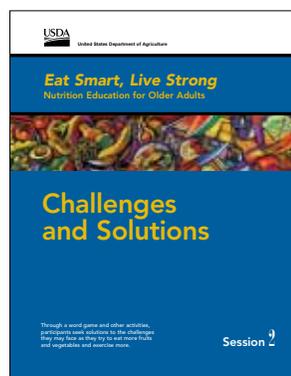
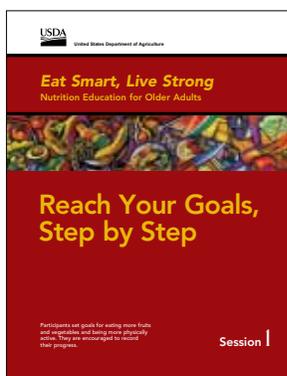


<sup>1</sup>This recommendation is based upon the estimated calorie need (1,600 calories) of sedentary women ages 60–74 years, depending on exercise and activity levels. Calorie intake in older adults can range from 1,600 calories to 2,600 calories per day (see page 7).

# Older Adults Will Benefit from *Eat Smart, Live Strong*

The four sessions in this kit are designed for able-bodied, independent, older adults 60 to 74 years of age. They promote specific eating and physical activity behaviors shown to improve health and well-being. The sessions are designed to:

- Encourage older adults to learn new skills
- Provide leaders with facilitated discussions and activities that promote enjoyable, social, and interactive learning
- Engage older adults in activities that can encourage behavior change
- Assist program providers in delivering nutrition education to older adults



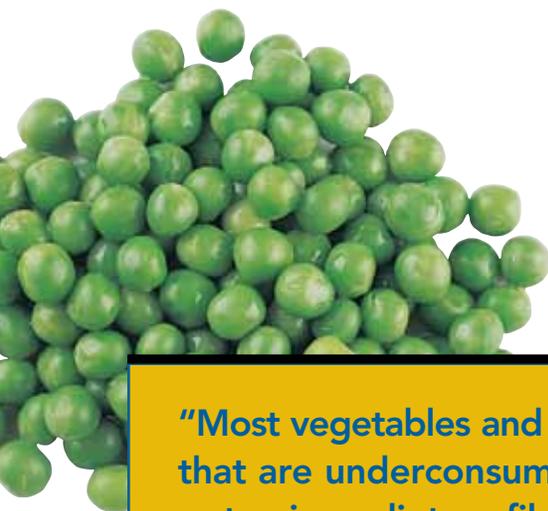
## *Eat Smart, Live Strong* Sessions Focus on Behavior



Good intentions and knowledge about health are not enough to make people healthy. Unless older adults actively do something, their health status does not improve and may even decline more rapidly. Each session in *Eat Smart, Live Strong* focuses on changing behavior by guiding participants in learning and practicing new skills.

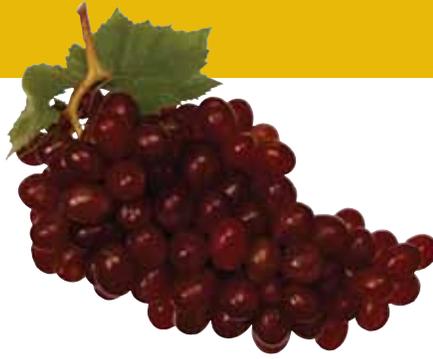
Changing habits is hard. You are asking participants to take on behaviors that they will need to repeat every day. Trying to change too many behaviors at once can be overwhelming.

*Eat Smart, Live Strong* helps you focus your efforts on just two behaviors. If participants adopt and maintain just these two simple behaviors, you can help them make a difference in their lives.



**“Most vegetables and fruits are major contributors of a number of nutrients that are underconsumed in the United States, including folate, magnesium, potassium, dietary fiber, and vitamins A, C, and K.”**

— 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



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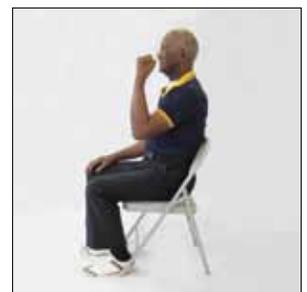
Experts from the fields of medicine, nutrition, and public health agree that eating more fruits and vegetables and participating in physical activity will benefit almost everyone. If older adults eat at least 3½ cups of fruits and vegetables daily as part of an overall healthy diet, they may:

- Get some of the vitamins, minerals, and fiber the body needs to maintain good health
- Maintain energy levels
- Maintain regularity
- Prevent or delay the effects of chronic disease such as obesity, hypertension, and heart disease
- Add color, taste, and variety to the diet

2

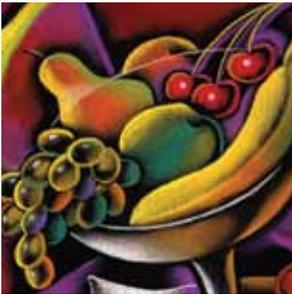
When older adults participate in at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days, they may:

- Prevent or delay the effects of chronic disease
- Feel better
- Decrease stress, anxiety, and depression
- Help control weight
- Build and maintain healthy bones, muscles, and joints
- Improve strength
- Increase balance and reduce the risk of falling
- Improve sleep



**Sharing the benefits gained by practicing these two behaviors will encourage older adults to try them.**

## *Eat Smart, Live Strong* Encourages People to Eat Better and Exercise More



For older adults to adopt new behaviors, they must feel encouraged and see how they will benefit from the behaviors. People are more likely to adopt a behavior when they:

- Have a chance to try it and find that they like it
- Feel that it will be easy to do and are confident that they can do it
- Believe that others support them in the new behavior; people such as family members, peers, and health professionals
- Set a goal to start a new habit, track their success, and gain a sense of accomplishment
- Participate in active learning, offering their own experiences and solutions
- See how potential obstacles can be overcome with new strategies and solutions



All four sessions in this kit stress these important ways of encouraging participants to achieve the two behaviors.



**“The amount of physical activity necessary to successfully maintain a healthy body weight depends on calorie intake and varies considerably among adults, including older adults.”**

— 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, U.S. Department of Agriculture and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.



In addition, the session activities provide:

- Games and activities that engage participants in learning
- Opportunities to socialize, which is important both to draw older adults to the sessions and to demonstrate that others like them value the two behaviors
- Exercises to demonstrate physical activity
- Suggestions for reinforcement tools or items to keep participants engaged

The session titles are:

**Session 1** Reach Your Goals, Step by Step

**Session 2** Challenges and Solutions

**Session 3** Colorful and Classic Favorites

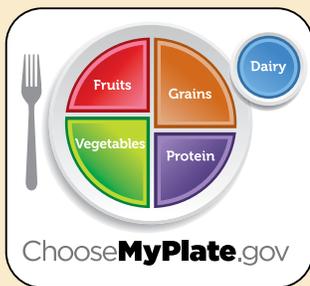
**Session 4** Eat Smart, Spend Less

Participants will share experiences, and each of the four sessions will draw on their personal and practical knowledge and understanding.

“Today, we know a lot more about older adults and their need to exercise. Regardless of their health and physical abilities, older adults can gain a lot by staying physically active. Even if you have difficulty standing or walking, you can still exercise and benefit from it. In fact, in most cases, you have more to lose by not doing anything.”

— Exercise and Physical Activity: Your Everyday Guide from National Institute for Aging, May 2011.

# Dietary Guidelines for Americans and ChooseMyPlate



*Eat Smart, Live Strong* is based on recommendations from the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans, a rich source of dietary health information for nutrition educators and health providers. These guidelines are based on the most up-to-date scientific evidence, and provide information and advice for choosing a nutritious diet, maintaining a healthy weight, achieving adequate exercise, and avoiding foodborne illness. The Dietary Guidelines for Americans reinforce the importance of a nutritious diet and regular physical activity in achieving and maintaining a healthy body weight for older adults.

Increasing the level of daily physical activity may also provide indirect nutritional benefits for older adults. A low-activity lifestyle limits the number of calories that can be consumed without gaining weight. The higher a person's physical activity level, the higher his energy requirement, and the easier it is to plan a daily food intake pattern that meets recommended nutrient requirements.

The Web site [www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov) is an interactive site to help individuals 2 years and older use the USDA food guidance system. The site provides individualized food plans, as well as tips for following the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

The table on page 7 highlights the recommended caloric intake and fruit and vegetable consumption for older adults 60 to 74 years of age. Encourage participants to eat the recommended daily amounts based on age, gender, and physical activity level to meet their nutritional needs.

## Fruit and Vegetable Intake for 1600 – 2600 Calories

	Low daily activity level (less than 30 minutes)	Medium daily activity level (30 to 60 minutes)	High daily activity level (60 minutes or more)
<b>Women ages 60–74<sup>2</sup></b>			
Recommended caloric intake	1600 cal.	1800 cal.	2000 – 2200 cal.
Recommended fruit consumption	1½ cups	1½ cups	2 cups
Recommended vegetable consumption	2 cups	2½ cups	2½ – 3 cups
<b>Men ages 60–74</b>			
Recommended caloric intake	2000 – 2200 cal.	2200 – 2400 cal.	2400 – 2600 cal.
Recommended fruit consumption	2 cups	2 cups	2 cups
Recommended vegetable consumption	2½ – 3 cups	3 cups	3 – 3½ cups

<sup>2</sup>The values in this table reflect information in the 2010 Dietary Guidelines for Americans consumer booklet.

## Using ChooseMyPlate.gov Optional Activity

Because of the interactive nature of ChooseMyPlate.gov, this web site provides an ideal opportunity to work with older adults participating in *Eat Smart, Live Strong* sessions. By using and sharing information, you can provide older adults with specific food plans, as well as tips for eating a nutritious diet and getting regular physical activity.

The following links will help you become familiar with ChooseMyPlate.gov materials and tools. The web site offers a wealth of information for nutrition educators and participants to help them teach and practice positive nutrition behaviors. Visit ChooseMyPlate.gov before using the sessions to become familiar with this comprehensive food guidance system.

### SuperTracker

[www.supertracker.usda.gov](http://www.supertracker.usda.gov)

### 10 Tips Nutrition Education Series

[www.choosemyplate.gov/healthy-eating-tips/ten-tips.html](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/healthy-eating-tips/ten-tips.html)

### Sample Menu and Recipes

[www.choosemyplate.gov/healthy-eating-tips/sample-menus-recipes.html](http://www.choosemyplate.gov/healthy-eating-tips/sample-menus-recipes.html)



At the end of an *Eat Smart, Live Strong* session, ask participants if they would like to develop a personal eating plan at [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov). You can make group or individual appointments with interested older adults. You will need to use a digital device, such as a laptop or computer, with an Internet connection.

To create a personal food plan for an older adult:

- Go to [ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://ChooseMyPlate.gov) and look for the "SuperTracker" button in the middle of the screen.
- Ask the participants if they would like to create a profile by entering their age, sex, and physical activity level or use the general plan. If needed, review the customized or sample plan with your participants to clarify any information.
- If participants are only interested in identifying their calorie needs, educators can also provide a personal Daily Plan.
- Enter the individual's age, sex, weight, height, and physical activity level to obtain a custom calorie plan to maintain or achieve a healthy weight. Create a printout version of the results by clicking on the print options at the right of the screen.
- Follow up with the participant after about a week to check progress.



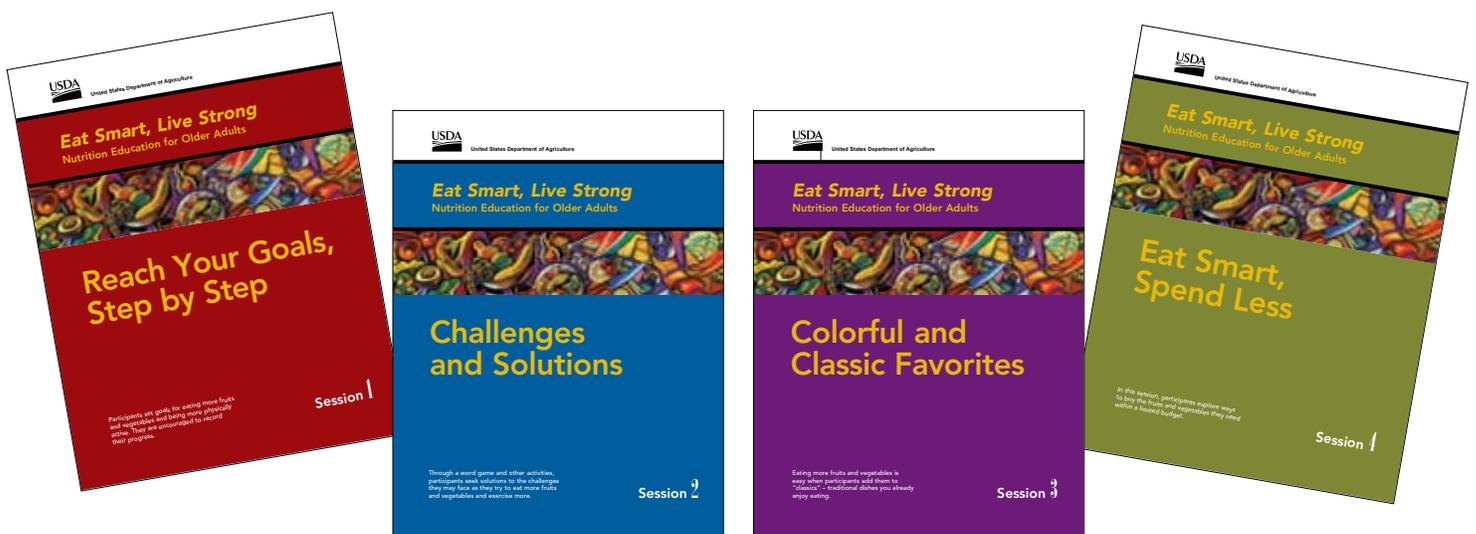
## Preparing for the *Eat Smart, Live Strong* Sessions

This kit provides you with most of what you need to prepare for and conduct each of the four sessions, including:

- Session instructions
- Facilitation tips
- Space for your notes and adaptations
- Reusable materials for games and activities
- Participant handouts to copy for use during the session and to send home with participants
- Feedback sheets for the participants

The information in each session is organized in a similar way:

- Objectives
- Overview
- How the Session Encourages Behavior
- Materials
- Preparation
- Optional Physical Activity Warm-Up
- The Session
  1. Welcome and Introduction
  2. Skills-Building Activity
  3. Wrap Up
- Optional Physical Activity Cool-Down





## Preparation and Materials Costs

Every effort has been made to keep the activities low in cost. Some facilitators are able to use donated food and other products for food demonstrations and tasting.

## Cost of Fruits and Vegetables

Participants may point out that fresh fruits and vegetables cost more than other foods. You will need to be ready to discuss low-cost options, especially during Sessions 2 and 4. Suggest other forms of fruits and vegetables such as dried, frozen, and canned options. Show samples of canned vegetables labeled as low sodium and canned fruits packed in 100% juice or water. Throughout these sessions, there are tips that you can share to help participants make choices to fit their budgets.



## Partnerships and Community Resources

As you review the sessions, think of local community resources that can help promote the behaviors. You may find other partners in your community who can provide discounts to your participants, recruit low-income older adults to come to your sessions, or offer space for you to hold your sessions. Become familiar with nutrition assistance programs and other community resources such as:

### FNS Nutrition Assistance Programs

- Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP)
- Older Americans Act Nutrition Program
- Commodity Supplemental Food Program
- Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program
- Food Distribution Programs on Indian Reservations

### Other Community Resources

- Home-delivered meal program
- Local congregate dining sites
- Local food banks and pantries
- Senior centers
- Community-based organizations
- Grocery stores
- Local American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)
- Local Departments on Aging

Refer participants to their local health care providers (clinics, dietitians, and nurses) to address health concerns or chronic diseases that may affect their dietary or physical activity choices.

By making connections in your community beforehand, you will be able to direct your participants to specific resources that can address their individual needs.

## Preparing for the *Eat Smart, Live Strong* Sessions continued

### Tailoring the Sessions for Your Groups

You may choose to do some or all of the activities in each session. You may also wish to adapt the activities to meet the specific needs of your site or your group participants. Tips for adjusting the sessions and ideas for expanding or reinforcing the activities are addressed throughout the session guides.

**To tailor the sessions, consider the following:**

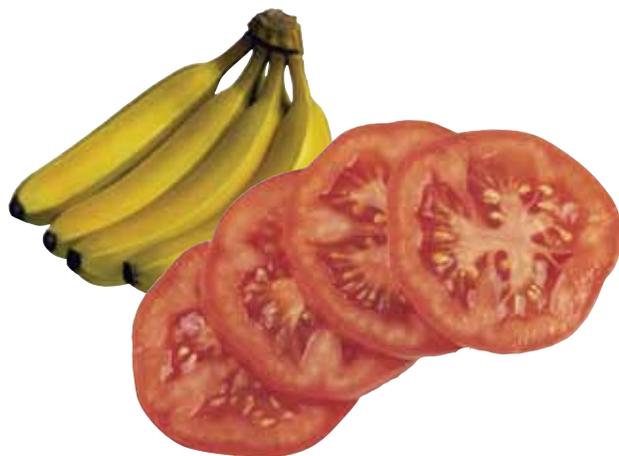
#### Available Space

The space where you meet may require you to make some changes to the session. For example, if you do not have blank wall space for posting cards, consider laying the cards out on a table. If you cannot move the chairs into a circle or place them around a table, you will want to find another way to allow participants to interact with one another.



#### Time

The approximate time you will need to conduct each session is about 45 minutes. If you have more time, use the exercises prepared for that session. Each booklet includes a different set of optional, non-strenuous exercises to use as warm-up and cool-down. These exercises can add an additional 20 minutes to the session.



## Multiple Sessions

The kit is designed as a series of four inter-related sessions, but each session may be used alone. If you are unable to offer the sessions in a series or if participants do not attend regularly, even a single session may help a participant to try a new behavior.

## Group Size

The discussions and activities in these sessions work best with groups of up to 10 people. If the group is large (more than 10), you may need to divide participants into separate sessions or ask another facilitator to help you.

## Participant Characteristics

The most important way for you to tailor the sessions is to take into account your participants' characteristics, culture, and life experiences. While you can adapt the kit's materials ahead of time, be sure to solicit participants' views and solutions within the activities to build on your participants' life experiences. Below are some of the ways you may need to adapt the kit's materials:

- **Culture.** People's food preferences are formed by experiences and culture. Let participants share ideas and information about their preferences. For example, in Session 3, participants suggest ways to add fruits or vegetables to their favorite dishes. These "classics" will vary widely, depending on culture and geography. This kit contains visual cards to show a range of traditional dishes but be ready to add other dishes according to participants' preferences.

Values and beliefs about physical activity also vary from culture to culture. Help participants identify appropriate physical activity that doesn't conflict with cultural values. In cases like this, participants may need help in finding appropriate ways to be physically active.

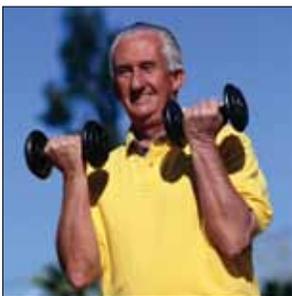




## Preparing for the *Eat Smart, Live Strong* Sessions continued

- **Lifestyle and living situation.** The materials are designed for able-bodied, independent older adults between the ages of 60 and 74. However, some of the adults who participate in your sessions may receive assistance from family members or others in food shopping, meal planning, and food preparation. Help participants look for ways to manage their food choices. For instance, if participants' meals are usually prepared by a family member or caregiver, encourage participants to share the session handouts with those who help them.

Look for other opportunities to influence those who are managing participants' meals. Caregivers also might be encouraged to motivate and provide opportunities for physical activity. Each handout includes information that may motivate caregivers and family members to encourage the two behaviors.



Older adults also may be limited in physical activity if they do not have an appropriate or safe space to exercise. Encourage participants to try doing the exercises at home, in a common space in their apartment buildings, at a local mall, or outside if the weather permits.



Encourage participants to find ways to become more physically active in their daily routines through activities such as:

- Parking their car farther away
  - Taking the stairs
  - Walking with friends
  - Joining free or reduced-cost physical activity groups available at their places of worship or community centers
- **Language and literacy.** You may work with people who have trouble reading – because they never learned, because their eyesight is failing, or because English is not their first language. Most of the handouts use pictures and other visuals with minimal text. Take care to ensure that participants capture the meaning of the visuals. You may need to explain the meaning the first time participants see the materials.

Spoken communication may be difficult if all participants are not comfortable speaking English. Identify a volunteer to interpret the information or use an interpreter to assist you in teaching the session.

## Ranges in Age and Capabilities

*Eat Smart, Live Strong* was developed and tested for low-income or able-bodied, independent adults 60 to 74 years of age. Even within the target age range, however, people's needs and capabilities vary greatly. As you plan the sessions consider:

- **Cognitive abilities:** Older adults have a wide range of cognitive abilities. Some participants may have trouble following directions or remembering how to complete an activity. Anticipate their needs with gentle reminders and cues so they are not embarrassed or frustrated. The handouts can be used by friends and family members to help the older adult remember to eat more fruits and vegetables and to exercise.
- **Vision:** The handouts in each session are designed with large type and bold visuals. If people still have trouble seeing the handouts, you may want to read them or describe them aloud. Some participants may be uneasy moving around the room because they cannot see well. Find an alternative such as having peers guide participants through the room.

- **Hearing:** Others may have trouble hearing and will respond better to visual cues.
- **Mobility limitations:** You may need to change the way you carry out some activities to accommodate those who use walkers or wheelchairs, or are limited in other ways. For example, you may have participants work in pairs when doing an activity requiring movement in the room; or you may encourage those in wheelchairs to participate in the optional exercises by using the seated exercises provided or by adapting the standing exercises to seated ones.

## Health Conditions and Concerns

When you are familiar with the participants in a group, you may be aware of their top health concerns. Encourage them to talk with their health care provider (physician, dietitian, or nurse) about their concerns. Emphasize that eating fruits and vegetables and getting regular exercise may actually help improve many of the conditions that make participants uneasy about trying the two behaviors. For participants that do not have regular health care, refer them to appropriate resources in their community.



## Marketing and Promoting *Eat Smart, Live Strong* Sessions



While you may be able to hold sessions with participants you are already working with, you will need to consider how you will promote the *Eat Smart, Live Strong* Sessions to recruit others. Promote the Sessions at FNS program sites and encourage service providers to inform older adults about *Eat Smart, Live Strong*.

Find ways to reach out to low-income older adults. Think about what will appeal to participants and how you can reach them. Customize the *Eat Smart, Live Strong* flyer provided in this kit with local contact information and use it to announce upcoming sessions.

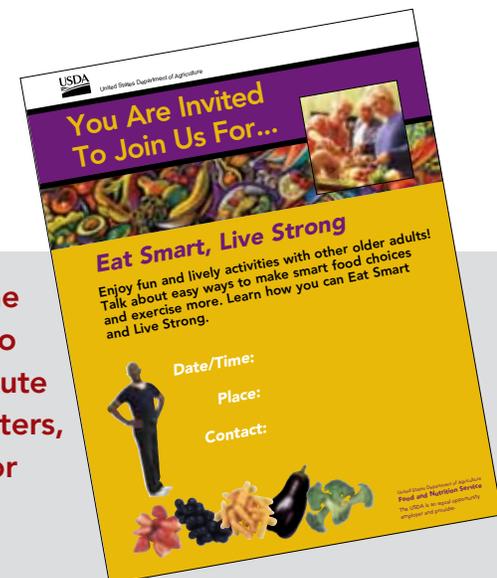
Use the flyer to reach potential participants:

- Mail to nutrition assistance program participants
- Place in shopping bags or boxes at food banks, the Senior Farmers' Market, or other commodities distribution sites
- Hand out at low-income housing sites, congregate meal sites, and senior centers
- Send home with participants and ask to share with a friend

Display the flyer in places where seniors live, work, and regularly visit:

- Senior centers
- Senior housing facilities
- Places of worship
- Shopping malls
- Grocery stores in low-income neighborhoods
- Work sites
- Libraries
- Community recreation centers

Consider sharing the flyer with those who prepare and distribute community newsletters, local newspapers, or bulletins in places of worship.





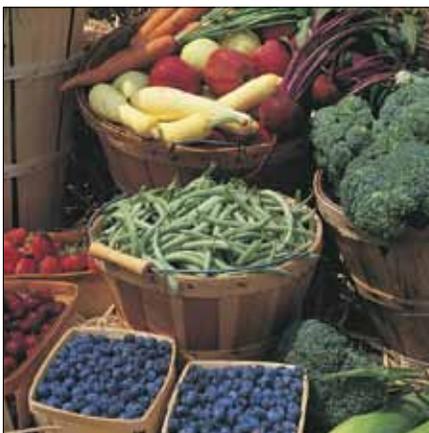
You may reach these low-income older adults through **partners in the community**:

- Ask people who see low-income older adults in other settings or for other reasons to encourage attendance. Partners such as Medicaid providers, social workers, senior activity coordinators, or medical providers can help recruit participants.
- Identify leaders in the community and provide them with flyers to pass around.

**Find places** that offer opportunities to conduct an *Eat Smart, Live Strong* session. Identify opportunities to conduct sessions at:

- Local SNAP offices
- Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program Sites
- Food commodity pickup locations
- Congregate meal sites
- Food banks

However you promote your sessions, keep track of what "works." You may do this by asking the participants to complete the *Participant Feedback Sheet* or asking them how they heard about the program.



# Eat Smart, Live Strong Sample Flyers



United States Department of Agriculture

## You Are Invited To Join Us For...



## *Eat Smart, Live Strong*

Enjoy fun and lively activities with other older adults! Talk about easy ways to make smart food choices and exercise more. Learn how you can Eat Smart and Live Strong.



***Date/Time:***

***Place:***

***Contact:***



United States Department of Agriculture  
**Food and Nutrition Service**

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United States Department of Agriculture

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# Get Feedback About Your Sessions

You, the participants, and your organization or agency will benefit from using the simple feedback tool provided in each session.



Feedback is useful for many reasons:

- As participants fill in the *Participant Feedback Sheet*, they will take a few moments to reflect on the value of what they have just experienced. This reflection may reinforce the behaviors promoted in the sessions.
- You will learn how participants react to the session. You can use their suggestions to improve future sessions.
- You will document your work, making it easier to report on what you have accomplished.

The session instructions remind you to allow participants a few minutes to complete the form before they leave. If you are working with a group whose reading and writing skills are not strong, you may want to read the feedback questions aloud and record responses on the *Participant Feedback Sheet*.

**Session 3 Participant Feedback Sheet**  
for Session 3, Colorful and Classic Favorites

Please take a few moments to complete this form. Return this sheet to the group leader. Your comments will help the leader continue to improve the session.

Today's Date: \_\_\_\_\_

1. How useful was the information you learned from this session? (Mark one response.)  
 Not at all useful  
 Somewhat useful  
 Useful  
 Very useful

Why or why not?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

2. Are you planning to eat more fruits and vegetables next week? (Mark one response.)  
 Yes  
 No  
 I am not sure

3. Are you planning to increase your physical activity next week? (Mark one response.)  
 Yes  
 No  
 I am not sure

4. What did you like the most about this session?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

5. What did you like the least about this session?  
 \_\_\_\_\_

6. How did you hear about this Eat Smart, Live Strong session? (Mark all that apply.)  
 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program office  
 Friend  
 Senior center  
 Poster  
 Flyer  
 Newsletter  
 Place of worship  
 Other - specify \_\_\_\_\_

7. In which programs do you participate? (Mark all that apply.)  
 Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program  
 Commodity Supplemental Food Program  
 Senior Farmers' Market Nutrition Program  
 Home delivered meals  
 Congregate meals  
 Food bank or pantry

Thank you for participating in Eat Smart, Live Strong!

Handout 3c: Eat Smart, Live Strong  
 Revised November 2011



## Optional Physical Activity

### “Warm-Up” and “Cool-Down”

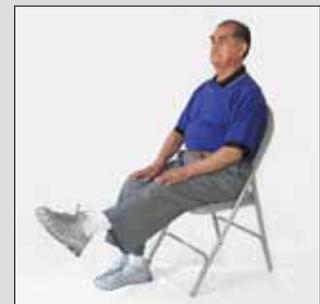
Physical activity is one of *Eat Smart, Live Strong's* two key behaviors. In 20 minutes, you can lead participants through several simple exercises as you begin and end each session.



Each session includes a different handout with four simple exercises. You may use the set as both a warm-up and a cool-down. When participants have a chance to try the same exercises twice – at the beginning and the end of the session – they gain the skills and self-confidence to do these exercises on their own. The handouts illustrate how to do each exercise properly.

Before leading these exercises, remind participants that they are not required to do anything that makes them uncomfortable. Make it clear that they may stop the exercise at any time. Keep in mind that you do not have to teach all of the exercises.

Encourage older adults to choose a physical activity that they enjoy when starting a daily exercise routine. Let them know it's okay to do a little bit throughout the day to reach their goal. Remind participants to start slowly, if they don't currently exercise. If older adults are interested in beginning an exercise program that includes more intense physical activity, encourage them to consult their health care provider.





## Beyond the Sessions: More Ways to Promote the Two Behaviors

While these sessions are designed to encourage low-income older adults to eat at least 3½ cups of fruits and vegetables a day and to participate in at least 30 minutes of physical activity most days of the week, the sessions alone may not be enough to help participants maintain those behaviors. You or your organization may be in a position to take some additional steps to put these two behaviors within daily practice of your participants.

The more you can engage partners to reinforce the lessons of ***Eat Smart, Live Strong***, the more support participants will have as they strive to eat better and exercise more. Let others know about the program:

- **Family members and caregivers** can provide encouragement and may be able to offer more fruits and vegetables or a safe place to exercise.

- **Physicians, nurses, dietitians, and other health professionals** may promote the behaviors to their patients. Older adults take tremendous stock in what their health care providers have to say. The “**SMART Cards**” that are part of Session 2 help the participants themselves to engage their health care providers in discussions about the two behaviors.
- **FNS program providers** and other **community-based organizations** that see low-income older adults on a regular basis may be happy to remind participants about the value of the two behaviors and follow up to see how they are doing.



Enjoy the ***Eat Smart, Live Strong*** Activity Kit!

# Additional Resources

## SNAP-Ed Connection

<http://snap.nal.usda.gov>

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service and the National Agricultural Library

A resource system for nutrition education providers.

## FNS Nutrition Link

[www.nutrition.gov](http://www.nutrition.gov)

U.S. Department of Agriculture, Food and Nutrition Service

Provides information about research, educational resources, grants, partnerships, nutrition guidance, consumer information, reports, and other nutrition topics.

## ChooseMyPlate

[www.ChooseMyPlate.gov](http://www.ChooseMyPlate.gov)

U.S. Department of Agriculture

USDA's Food Guidance System can be customized by age and activity levels to help consumers and professionals understand and follow the Dietary Guidelines for Americans.

## U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans

[www.DietaryGuidelines.gov](http://www.DietaryGuidelines.gov)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Agriculture

Provides the latest dietary guidance and includes tools for all users.

## Nutrition and Physical Activity

[www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/index.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/index.htm)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion

Offers information about nutrition and physical activity as well as access to *Growing Stronger: Strength Training for Older Adults*.

## 2008 Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans

[www.health.gov/paguidelines/guidelines/default.aspx](http://www.health.gov/paguidelines/guidelines/default.aspx)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

Small steps can make a big difference in a person's health. This resource provides information and tools to help improve nutrition and physical activity for all age groups.

## Physical Activity and Health: A Report of the Surgeon General

[www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/sgr/prerep.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/sgr/prerep.htm)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

A comprehensive report that outlines the importance of promoting physical activity.

## Exercise and Physical Activity: Your Everyday Guide from the National Institute on Aging

[www.nia.nih.gov/health/publication/exercise-physical-activity-your-everyday-guide-national-institute-aging-1](http://www.nia.nih.gov/health/publication/exercise-physical-activity-your-everyday-guide-national-institute-aging-1)

The National Institute on Aging

Provides numerous examples of safe exercises, self-tests, and sample exercise routines for older adults that can be used in groups or at home.

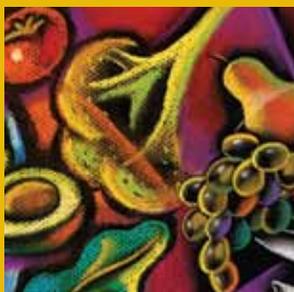
## Administration on Aging

[www.aoa.gov](http://www.aoa.gov)

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Provides a comprehensive overview of a wide variety of topics, programs, and services related to aging.

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**Jackie R. Walters**  
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Georgia Department of Human Resources

**Wen Yen Juan**  
Department of Health and Human Services

---

**Food and Nutrition Service Project Officer**

**Donna Johnson-Bailey**  
USDA

**Food and Nutrition Project Team**

**Judy Wilson**  
**Alice Lockett**  
**Anita Singh**  
**Marion Hinnens**  
**Alicia White**  
USDA

**Revised by USDA Center for Nutrition Policy and Promotion**

**Project Contractor**

**Academy for Educational Development (AED)**  
(currently FHI360)

**Project Manager**

**Thomas Lehman**

**Project Staff**

**Susan Middlestadt**  
**Ann Jimerson**  
**Lisa Tensuan**  
**Junette McWilliams**  
**Jennifer French**  
**Kevin Bates**

United States Department of Agriculture  
**Food and Nutrition Service**  
3101 Park Center Drive, Alexandria, VA 22302



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# with protein foods, variety is key



## 10 tips for choosing protein

**Protein foods include both animal (meat, poultry, seafood, and eggs) and plant (beans, peas, soy products, nuts, and seeds) sources.** We all need protein—but most Americans eat enough, and some eat more than they need. How much is enough? Most people, ages 9 and older, should eat 5 to 7 ounces\* of protein foods each day.

### 1 vary your protein food choices

Eat a variety of foods from the Protein Foods Group each week. Experiment with main dishes made with beans or peas, nuts, soy, and seafood.

### 2 choose seafood twice a week

Eat seafood in place of meat or poultry twice a week. Select a variety of seafood—include some that are higher in oils and low in mercury, such as salmon, trout, and herring.



### 3 make meat and poultry lean or low fat

Choose lean or low-fat cuts of meat like round or sirloin and ground beef that is at least 90% lean. Trim or drain fat from meat and remove poultry skin.

### 4 have an egg

One egg a day, on average, doesn't increase risk for heart disease, so make eggs part of your weekly choices. Only the egg yolk contains cholesterol and saturated fat, so have as many egg whites as you want.

### 5 eat plant protein foods more often

Try beans and peas (kidney, pinto, black, or white beans; split peas; chickpeas; hummus), soy products (tofu, tempeh, veggie burgers), nuts, and seeds. They are naturally low in saturated fat and high in fiber.



### 6 nuts and seeds

Choose unsalted nuts or seeds as a snack, on salads, or in main dishes to replace meat or poultry. Nuts and seeds are a concentrated source of calories, so eat small portions to keep calories in check.

### 7 keep it tasty and healthy

Try grilling, broiling, roasting, or baking—they don't add extra fat. Some lean meats need slow, moist cooking to be tender—try a slow cooker for them. Avoid breading meat or poultry, which adds calories.

### 8 make a healthy sandwich

Choose turkey, roast beef, canned tuna or salmon, or peanut butter for sandwiches. Many deli meats, such as regular bologna or salami, are high in fat and sodium—make them occasional treats only.



### 9 think small when it comes to meat portions

Get the flavor you crave but in a smaller portion. Make or order a smaller burger or a "petite" size steak.

### 10 check the sodium

Check the Nutrition Facts label to limit sodium. Salt is added to many canned foods—including beans and meats. Many processed meats—such as ham, sausage, and hot dogs—are high in sodium. Some fresh chicken, turkey, and pork are brined in a salt solution for flavor and tenderness.

\* What counts as an ounce of protein foods? 1 ounce lean meat, poultry, or seafood; 1 egg; ¼ cup cooked beans or peas; ½ ounce nuts or seeds; or 1 tablespoon peanut butter.

# 10 tips

Nutrition  
Education Series

# salt and sodium

## 10 tips to help you cut back



**It's clear that Americans have a taste for salt**, but salt plays a role in high blood pressure. Everyone, including kids, should reduce their sodium intake to less than 2,300 milligrams of sodium a day (about 1 teaspoon of salt). Adults age 51 and older, African Americans of any age, and individuals with high blood pressure, diabetes, or chronic kidney disease should further reduce their sodium intake to 1,500 mg a day.

### 1 think fresh

Most of the sodium Americans eat is found in processed foods. Eat highly processed foods less often and in smaller portions—especially cheesy foods, such as pizza; cured meats, such as bacon, sausage, hot dogs, and deli/luncheon meats; and ready-to-eat foods, like canned chili, ravioli, and soups. Fresh foods are generally lower in sodium.

### 2 enjoy home-prepared foods

Cook more often at home—where you are in control of what's in your food. Preparing your own foods allows you to limit the amount of salt in them.

### 3 fill up on veggies and fruits—they are naturally low in sodium

Eat plenty of vegetables and fruits—fresh or frozen. Eat a vegetable or fruit at every meal.

### 4 choose dairy and protein foods that are lower in sodium

Choose more fat-free or low-fat milk and yogurt in place of cheese, which is higher in sodium. Choose fresh beef, pork, poultry, and seafood, rather than those with salt added. Deli or luncheon meats, sausages, and canned products like corned beef are higher in sodium. Choose unsalted nuts and seeds.

### 5 adjust your taste buds

Cut back on salt little by little—and pay attention to the natural tastes of various foods. Your taste for salt will lessen over time.



### 6 skip the salt

Skip adding salt when cooking. Keep salt off the kitchen counter *and* the dinner table. Use spices, herbs, garlic, vinegar, or lemon juice to season foods or use no-salt seasoning mixes. Try black or red pepper, basil, curry, ginger, or rosemary.

### 7 read the label

Read the Nutrition Facts label and the ingredients statement to find packaged and canned foods lower in sodium. Look for foods labeled “low sodium,” “reduced sodium,” or “no salt added.”

### 8 ask for low-sodium foods when you eat out

Restaurants may prepare lower sodium foods at your request and will serve sauces and salad dressings on the side so you can use less.

### 9 pay attention to condiments

Foods like soy sauce, ketchup, pickles, olives, salad dressings, and seasoning packets are high in sodium. Choose low-sodium soy sauce and ketchup. Have a carrot or celery stick instead of olives or pickles. Use only a sprinkling of flavoring packets instead of the entire packet.

### 10 boost your potassium intake

Choose foods with potassium, which may help to lower your blood pressure. Potassium is found in vegetables and fruits, such as potatoes, beet greens, tomato juice and sauce, sweet potatoes, beans (white, lima, kidney), and bananas. Other sources of potassium include yogurt, clams, halibut, orange juice, and milk.

**10 tips**  
Nutrition  
Education Series

# save more at the grocery store



## 10 MyPlate tips to stretch your food dollar

Using coupons and looking for the best price are great ways to save money at the grocery store. Knowing how to find them is the first step to cutting costs on food. Use the MyPlate coupon tips to stretch your budget.

**1** **find deals right under your nose**  
Look for coupons with your receipt, as peel-offs on items, and on signs along aisle shelves.

**2** **search for coupons**  
Many stores still send ads and coupons for promotion, so don't overlook that so-called "junk mail." You can also do a Web search for "coupons." Go through your coupons at least once a month and toss out any expired ones.



**3** **look for savings in newspaper**  
Brand name coupons are found as inserts in the paper every Sunday—except on holiday weekends. Some stores will double the value of brand name coupons on certain days.

**4** **join your store's loyalty program**  
Signup is usually free and you can receive savings and electronic coupons when you provide your email address.

**5** **buy when foods are on sale**  
Maximize your savings by using coupons on sale items. You may find huge deals such as "buy one get one free."

**6** **find out if the store will match competitors' coupons**  
Many stores will accept coupons, as long as they are for the same item. Check with the customer service desk for further details.

**7** **stay organized so coupons are easy to find**  
Sort your coupons either by item or in alphabetical order. Develop a system that's easiest for you and make finding coupons quick and hassle-free. Ideas for coupon storage include 3-ring binders, accordion-style organizers, or plain envelopes.



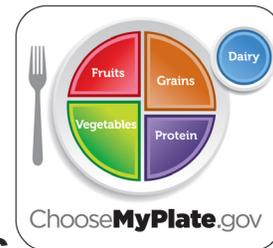
**8** **find a coupon buddy**  
Swap coupons you won't use with a friend. You can get rid of clutter and discover additional discounts.

**9** **compare brands**  
Store brands can be less expensive than some of the name brand foods. Compare the items to find better prices.

**10** **stick to the list**  
Make a shopping list for all the items you need. Keep a running list on your phone, on the refrigerator, or in a wallet. When you're in the store, do your best to buy only the items on your list.



# smart shopping for veggies and fruits



## **10** tips for affordable vegetables and fruits

**It is possible to fit vegetables and fruits into any budget.** Making nutritious choices does not have to hurt your wallet. Getting enough of these foods promotes health and can reduce your risk of certain diseases. There are many low-cost ways to meet your fruit and vegetable needs.

### **1** celebrate the season

Use fresh vegetables and fruits that are in season. They are easy to get, have more flavor, and are usually less expensive. Your local farmer's market is a great source of seasonal produce.



### **2** why pay full price?

Check the local newspaper, online, and at the store for sales, coupons, and specials that will cut food costs. Often, you can get more for less by visiting larger grocery stores (discount grocers if available).

### **3** stick to your list

Plan out your meals ahead of time and make a grocery list. You will save money by buying only what you need. Don't shop when you're hungry. Shopping after eating will make it easier to pass on the tempting snack foods. You'll have more of your food budget for vegetables and fruits.

### **4** try canned or frozen

Compare the price and the number of servings from fresh, canned, and frozen forms of the same veggie or fruit. Canned and frozen items may be less expensive than fresh. For canned items, choose fruit canned in 100% fruit juice and vegetables with "low sodium" or "no salt added" on the label.



### **5** buy small amounts frequently

Some fresh vegetables and fruits don't last long. Buy small amounts more often to ensure you can eat the foods without throwing any away.

### **6** buy in bulk when items are on sale

For fresh vegetables or fruits you use often, a large size bag is the better buy. Canned or frozen fruits or vegetables can be bought in large quantities when they are on sale, since they last much longer.

### **7** store brands = savings

Opt for store brands when possible. You will get the same or similar product for a cheaper price. If your grocery store has a membership card, sign up for even more savings.

### **8** keep it simple

Buy vegetables and fruits in their simplest form. Pre-cut, pre-washed, ready-to-eat, and processed foods are convenient, but often cost much more than when purchased in their basic forms.



### **9** plant your own

Start a garden—in the yard or a pot on the deck—for fresh, inexpensive, flavorful additions to meals. Herbs, cucumbers, peppers, or tomatoes are good options for beginners. Browse through a local library or online for more information on starting a garden.



### **10** plan and cook smart

Prepare and freeze vegetable soups, stews, or other dishes in advance. This saves time and money. Add leftover vegetables to casseroles or blend them to make soup. Overripe fruit is great for smoothies or baking.