



Nutrition 2000 for Successful Aging

Population Trends

In 1960, 8.1 percent (244 million people) of the world's population was 60 years of age and over. If current growth rates continue, by 2020, 12.8 percent (or more than 1 billion people) will be in this 60-and-over age group.

In the United States, there are currently more than 3 million Americans over the age of 85. By 2040, it is predicted that the number will quadruple to more than 12 million Americans.

People over age 85 are now the fastest growing age segment in the United States.

What happens as we age?

Aging is the cumulative effect of many biological processes:

1. **Oxidative damage** – When oxidation occurs in cells, producing energy, destructive “free radicals” are produced. Free radicals have been discovered to contribute to the development of heart disease, stroke, and cancer.
2. **Mutations** – When cells divide the genetic material is copied. Each time a copy is made, there is a chance of error. Older organisms have experienced more cell division and thus have a greater chance of “mistakes” or mutations.
3. **Faulty DNA repair**– Mistakes in copies of the genetic code are corrected with less efficiency as we age.
4. **Cell Accumulation** – Cells have a slower turnover rate as we age. Some cells that no longer divide may not go away, and this leaves less room for new, productive cells.

Keep Moving!

Exercise is an important recommendation for preventing and treating non-insulin dependent diabetes, hypertension, heart disease, and osteoporosis.

In Kentucky, 76 percent of adults from ages 55 to 64 report being sedentary; the rate continues to increase with age.

There is usually a loss of muscle mass and a decrease in strength during aging. A recent study in the *Journal of the American Dietetic Association* reports that loss of muscle and strength are not associated with age, but lack of exercise. It is an excellent idea to make exercise part of your lifestyle and continue to be active as you age.



A decrease in activity level during aging can also be associated with increased weight gain.

Kentuckians in the 45-54 age group have the highest prevalence of being overweight – 41.2 percent.

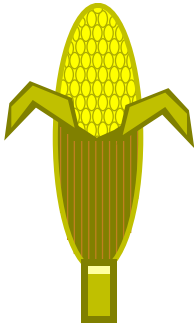


Decrease of muscle mass, muscle strength, metabolic rate, and activity leads to the need for fewer calories. Many times lower energy needs are not matched by an appropriate decline in food intake. As a

result, adults gain weight as they age. Excess weight and obesity increase an individual's risk for at least five of the leading causes of death. One of the first steps toward successful aging begins with achieving and maintaining a healthy weight. Start by making exercise part of your daily routine and maintaining a healthy diet.

Tip: Try eating smaller, more frequent meals to combat weight gain. A recent study reported by the USDA compared the fat-burning ability of eight women in their 20s with eight women in their 60s and 70s. The older adults kept pace with the younger women when meals of 250 and 500 calories were consumed but couldn't match their fat-burning rate after a 1,000 calorie meal.

Most diseases don't happen overnight. You have many chances to make good choices, especially when it comes to what you eat. The incidence of disease increases with age, and studies indicate the onset or severity may be decreased with healthy food choices.



Eat Your Fruits and Veggies!

Oxygen-free radicals are behind many of the conditions older adults endure, including cardiovascular disease and cancer. There is strong evidence that a high intake of fruits and vegetables combats these diseases. Free radicals may also be the cause of diminished brain functioning associated with aging and disorders such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's disease. The powerful antioxidants of fruits and vegetables may help fight memory loss.

Make sure you are getting 5-A-Day to receive all the health benefits of antioxidants!

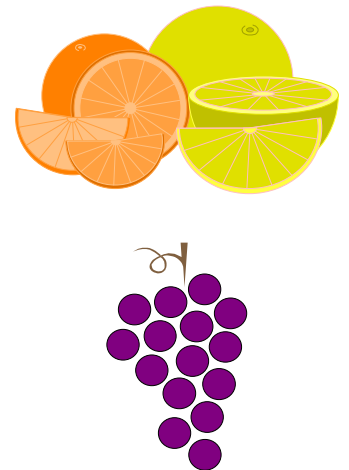
Top Antioxidant Foods

Fruits:

prunes	raisins	blueberries	blackberries
strawberries	raspberries	plums	
oranges	red grapes	cherries	

Vegetables:

kale	spinach	brussels sprouts	alfalfa sprouts
broccoli	beets	red bell pepper	
onion	corn	eggplant	



Chain Reaction

Many of the conditions aging adults face are related. Let's look at some of the links and ways to perhaps break the chain reaction that can form as adults age.

Obesity to Diabetes

The prevalence of diabetes in Kentucky increases with advancing age, from 0.2 percent in ages 18 to 24 to 11.7 percent in ages 65 to 74. Insulin receptors become less efficient in overweight adults, and the result may be diabetes. Besides exercising and losing weight, current research has found that soluble fiber may help control blood glucose and insulin levels.

Hypertension to Stroke

High blood pressure can cause arteries to narrow and make proper blood flow difficult. The American Heart Association reports the risk of stroke rises proportionately with increasing blood pressure. The DASH diet has been found to decrease blood pressure and fight hypertension. The diet is rich in fruits, vegetables, low-fat dairy products, and is low in fat. High dietary fiber, potassium, calcium, and magnesium are also contributing factors in the diet.

Stroke to Alzheimer's

Until recently, there was little evidence that Alzheimer's could be prevented. Researchers have found that strokes – which are many times avoidable – may contribute to Alzheimer's. A large number of strokes can be prevented by not smoking, decreasing blood pressure, controlling diabetes, maintaining a healthy weight, and eating 5-A-Day fruits and vegetables.

Osteoporosis to Arthritis

Building and maintaining strong, healthy bones begins in the early years of life. A calcium-rich diet is the first step. After age 35, more calcium is lost from bones than is deposited. If strong bones weren't built early in life, there is an increased risk for developing the bone-thinning condition, osteoporosis. Research has shown a link between osteoporosis and the development of arthritis. By maintaining a diet rich in calcium you can decrease the risk of osteoporosis and possibly fight the development of arthritis.



Looking for the Fountain of Youth?

People continually look for ways to improve or maintain their health, especially in the later years of life. The sales market is saturated with advertisements for quick fixes and products that possibly will help you stay healthy and young. Health quackery has become a big business, and seniors are a prime target for these scams. At least \$10 billion is spent each year on unproven medical treatments.

Things to Look for that may Suggest Health Fraud

1. *Advertising.* When a product is advertised, make sure you take a closer look. Not all advertised products are quackery, but many times unproven health products are marketed on television and in print.

2. *Suggestion that the product is treatment for a serious disease.* Products bought by mail or over-the-counter cannot cure more serious illnesses.

3. *Statement that the product can cure more than one illness.* There is no magic fix for all health problems. Quacks often claim products can cure more than one illness so they can profit from more potential buyers.

4. *Testimonials.* Instead of scientific evidence, “Satisfied customers” may be used to promote the product.

5. *The words.* If words like “miraculous,” “amazing,” and “medical breakthrough” are used to catch customers’ attention the product may be health quackery. Doctors report scientific breakthroughs in medical journals, not on television or in magazines.

6. *If it sounds too good to be true, it probably is.* Health fraud can steal an older adult’s money and may even their health. Faulty products are usually expensive and sometimes can be harmful, resulting in doctor visits and additional bills.

Keys to Successful Aging

Everyone has a key chain. Keys open locks to items of value....houses, cars, and suitcase locks. Add some new keys to your ring in the year 2000. They may help unlock the doors to better health and a longer life. Choose from this list of keys and make them fit your lock!



Key 1– Make exercise a part of your lifestyle. Start by making small changes like using the stairs or taking a walk instead of watching television.



Key 2– Achieve and maintain a healthy weight. A healthy weight can lead to a decrease in your risk for numerous diseases. Start with small goals of losing 1 or 2 pounds a week. Research has shown that no matter what your weight, even a 10 percent decrease can have significant health benefits. A smart diet and exercise are the best ways to achieve results.



Key 3– Eat five fruits and vegetables a day. Fruits and vegetables have powerful disease fighting phytochemicals and antioxidants. Studies have shown that they may help defend against cancer, heart disease, hypertension, and Alzheimer’s disease.



Key 4– Get plenty of fiber. Fiber can be found in breads and cereals, beans, and fruits and vegetables. High intake may help decrease the risk of obesity, diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, and cancer.



Key 5- Dive into dairy. Low-fat dairy products provide excellent sources of calcium. Calcium is needed to prevent bone loss that can lead to osteoporosis. It may also help decrease blood pressure and prevent hypertension.



Key 6- Break the chain. Don't allow your body to make continuous disease links and form a chain of bad health. You have the power to decrease your risk of numerous disease through diet and exercise. Start by making small lifestyle changes that optimize your health as an older person.

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