
Good food for Elders - tucker talk tips

Summary

- Good nutrition and keeping active is important for Elders by helping to keep them fit, strong and healthy.
 - Elders should try to eat at least three meals every day and include a variety of nutritious foods.
 - Elders who are frail and underweight should eat regularly, eat small amounts more often and treat themselves to foods that they enjoy.
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Good nutrition and a healthy diet are important for Elders. Eating well and staying active can help to give them more energy, feel good and prevent or manage health problems. Elders should try to eat at least three meals every day and include a variety of nutritious foods.

Good nutrition is important for Elders

Good nutrition and a healthy diet are important for Elders. Eating well and staying active can help Elders to:

- Feel good and have more energy
- Keep muscles and bones strong
- Stay at a healthy weight
- Recover better if they get sick
- Prevent or manage health problems like diabetes and heart disease.

Types of foods that Elders should eat

Elders should try to eat at least three meals every day and include a variety of nutritious foods such as:

- Two fruits and five vegies – fresh, frozen, canned or dried
- Plenty of wholegrain breads and cereals – high-fibre varieties can help prevent constipation
- Three to four serves of milk, yoghurt, custard or cheese – calcium is important for Elders to keep your bones strong (choose reduced-fat types where possible)
- Oils such as olive or canola and margarine (instead of butter, lard or dripping) – healthy fats protect the heart
- Low and reduced-salt foods – to help control blood pressure
- Low-sugar foods and drinks – to protect teeth and gums
- Plenty of water or other drinks, such as tea and milk – to avoid dehydration.

Food tips for Elders who are frail or underweight

Some Elders may be frail or underweight. In these cases Elders should:

- Eat regularly and try not to skip meals
 - Eat small amounts of food more often
 - Treat yourself to foods that they enjoy
 - Eat nutritious snacks like yoghurt, cheese, fruit or dried fruit
 - Have a meal at the time of day when you feel at your best
 - If you can't manage a meal, try to have a milk drink instead
 - Add extra margarine to your food to help you put on weight
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- Make fluids count – drink milk or fruit juice between meals
- See your doctor for advice about nutritional supplements.

Keeping active is good for Elders

Thirty minutes of exercise every day is all it takes. This doesn't have to be done all at once. You can do two lots of 15 minutes or three lots of 10 minutes of exercise.

Being active helps Elders to:

- Keep muscles and bones strong
- Stay at a healthy body weight
- Lower blood pressure
- Have a healthy heart
- Prevent or manage diabetes
- Feel good and have more energy.

To help keep Elders interested in exercise, choose activities that you enjoy such as:

- Walking
- Gardening
- Water aerobics
- Dancing
- Strength training
- Playing with the grandkids.

Where to get help

- Your doctor
- Victorian Aboriginal Health Services Tel. (03) 9419 3000 or 132 660 (after hours)
- Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation Tel. (03) 9411 9411
- Dietitians Association of Australia Tel. 1800 812 942

Things to remember

- Good nutrition and keeping active is important for Elders by helping to keep them fit, strong and healthy.
- Elders should try to eat at least three meals every day and include a variety of nutritious foods.
- Elders who are frail and underweight should eat regularly, eat small amounts more often and treat themselves to foods that they enjoy.

This page has been produced in consultation with and approved by:

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