



Nutrition & Aging Quiz

Discover the Secrets of Eating for Your Age

Did You Know?

- ▶ People tend to eat more when dining with family or friends than when they are alone.
- ▶ Nearly 50% of seniors don't consume enough high-protein foods, and only around 32% eat the recommended five servings of fruits and vegetables each day.
- ▶ Resistance training does much more to keep muscles strong than endurance exercises like walking or swimming.

It's no surprise to hear that good nutrition makes for good health—warding off disease, giving you the energy to stay active, and keeping you mentally and physically fit. But you may not realize that as you age, your body's nutrient requirements change. Learn the secrets of eating for your age and make sure you get the nutrients that can add vitality and years to your life.

Take this quiz and find out how much you know about nutrition and aging, learn what you should be discussing with your health care provider, and start eating for your age.

True or False?

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1) My body needs less protein than it did when I was younger. | <input type="radio"/> T <input type="radio"/> F |
| 2) Our bodies tend to lose muscle mass as we age. | <input type="radio"/> T <input type="radio"/> F |
| 3) Medications can reduce my appetite. | <input type="radio"/> T <input type="radio"/> F |
| 4) My stomach may feel full much sooner now than it did when I was younger. | <input type="radio"/> T <input type="radio"/> F |
| 5) Losing weight, even if I'm not trying to, is OK at my age. | <input type="radio"/> T <input type="radio"/> F |

How did you do? Turn the card over for the answers ➡

*No matter what your age, start **NOW** and make good nutrition a way of life.*

1) **FALSE** – Protein needs increase with age.

As we age, our bodies generally need fewer calories but more protein. Eating more protein doesn't have to mean raising your cholesterol—there are many heart-healthy proteins like egg whites, beans, tofu, nuts, lean meats, low-fat cheeses, and yogurt.

Tip: Consider high protein supplement drinks and get other essential nutrients from fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and low-fat dairy products.

2) **TRUE** – Getting older often means less muscle and more body fat.

Our body's ability to build and maintain muscle slows as we age, often leading to weakness and disability. Regular exercise and healthy eating can help fight this decline. Make sure you eat enough protein and work strength training and resistance exercises into your routine.

Tip: Talk to your doctor about the right exercise plan for you, and remember that you can do simple exercises at home.

3) **TRUE** – Prescription and over-the-counter drugs can make you lose your appetite.

Medications can change the way food tastes and smells, reduce your appetite, and alter your eating habits. Some illnesses, such as depression, can also reduce your appetite or change the way your body absorbs nutrients.

Tip: If you have noticed a reduction in your appetite, talk to your doctor about how it may be impacting your nutrition.

4) **TRUE** – As you age, physical changes can make you full faster.

Changes in hormones and stomach function can make you full with less food, making it difficult to get all the nutrients you need. Other reasons older people stop eating right include dental problems, financial difficulties, eating alone, depression, stress, physical limitations that make it hard to shop and prepare meals, smoking, and too much alcohol.

Tip: If you think you're not getting enough of the right nutrients, contact a registered dietitian (find one at www.eatright.org) and discuss what changes you need to make.

5) **FALSE** – This may put you at significant risk for malnutrition.

Unintentional weight loss of more than a few pounds is not a normal part of aging, no matter what your weight. It may be a sign of disease or malnutrition and can lead to loss of muscle mass, frailty, decreased immunity, disability, poor memory, and declining health.

Tip: Make sure you're getting enough calories to support your body's energy demands and talk to your doctor if you have been losing weight or hope to shed a few pounds.

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Resources for More Information on Nutrition and Aging

- ▶ American Dietetic Association
www.eatright.org
- ▶ American Institute for Cancer Research
www.aicr.org
- ▶ Nutrition.gov
www.nutrition.gov