

National Nutrition Month 2020 – Eat Right, Bite by Bite

It's that time of the year,

National Nutrition Month is finally here!

Healthy eating is the key

To making your life the best it can be!

The steps are as simple as bite by bite,

which will help you to always eat right!

Every little bit of proper nutrition is a step in the right direction. Eating healthy should not be stressful or overwhelming. Small steps have a greater impact on your overall health than doing it all at once. It will put you in a mindset to make healthy choices and lead you on the path to wellness. Like habits, overtime with practice, we adjust to new changes and they become a normal part of our daily life.

Get a kick start today! Make one small change in your daily eating habits, such as reducing added sugars. It's as easy as replacing a sugary dessert with a bowl of frozen berries as an after-dinner treat.

Please refer to the following link for additional healthy tips:

<https://www.eatright.org/food/resources/handouts-and-tip-sheets>

For more information or to meet with a registered dietitian, please contact: The Nutrition Department at nutrition@ESMV.org or 978-686-1422

Elder Services of the Merrimack Valley also offers a Healthy Eating for Successful Living in Older Adults workshop through the Healthy Living Center of Excellence. This workshop is for older adults who wants to learn more about nutrition and how lifestyle changes can promote better health. Based on the USDA MyPlate, the main components of the program include goal setting, problem solving, group support, nutrition education, self-assessment and management of dietary patterns. The program is delivered by trained leaders with the support of a nutritionist or registered dietician. Please visit our website HealthyLiving4me.org to see if we are running a workshop in your area!



Highlights of a healthy plate for older adults:

- **Fruits and veggies dominate.** Fruits and vegetables fill nearly half of the retooled MyPlate. Dark, leafy vegetables are particularly rich in nutrients.
- **Colorful choices are healthy.** Whole fruits and vegetables with deeply colored flesh are best. Berries, which may protect aging brains, are part of the MyPlate picture.
- **Frozen and canned foods are fine.** For seniors, canned and frozen foods can be convenient alternatives. They last longer than fresh produce and may simplify portion control. Choose canned goods packed in their own juices or in low-sodium varieties.
- **Salt is off the table.** While some salt is necessary to maintain the proper balance of fluids in the body, too much salt causes the kidneys to retain water, which increases blood volume and pressure and puts a strain on the heart.
- **Herbs and spices boost flavor.** Who needs salt? A wide variety of herbs enhance the flavor of foods without bumping up blood pressure, panelists pointed out.
- **Healthy oils for healthy fat.** Liquid vegetables oils and soft margarine fill the center MyPlate circle. That's because they provide an important source of fatty acids and some fat-soluble vitamins.
- **Don't forget fluids.** Water, tea, coffee, soups and even fruits and vegetables provide essential fluid.

- **Protein comes in many sources.** Nuts, beans, fish, lean meat and eggs all provide protein. MyPlate recommends choosing a variety of sources, including certain dairy products.
- **Dairy has a place.** Milk, cheeses and yogurts contain calcium, protein and other nutrients. The key is choosing fat-free or low-fat versions, according to MyPlate.
- **Grains give fiber.** Whole grains, such as pasta and bread, and fortified foods including cereal provide dietary fiber and B vitamins.
- **The "active" ingredient.** Don't forget to incorporate physical activity into your daily routine! Even the smallest of movements make a huge difference.