

Nutrients of Special Concern for Older Americans

According to Dietary Guidelines for Americans 2005, adults of all ages may not be getting enough of these nutrients in their diets:

- **Calcium** (milk and milk products)
- **Potassium** (fruits, vegetables and milk products)
- **Fiber** (whole grains, fruits and vegetables)
- **Magnesium** (fruits and vegetables)
- **Vitamin A as carotenoids** (carotenoids are found in orange, yellow and green fruits and vegetables)
- **Vitamin C** (fruits and vegetables)
- **Vitamin E** (nuts, seeds, fortified cereals, vegetable oil)

It's recommended that we get these nutrients from foods by following a balanced eating pattern such as MyPyramid.

On the other hand, Americans consume too much:

- energy as **calories**
- **saturated and trans fat**
- **cholesterol**
- **added sugars**
- **salt**

People over age 50 may need to take supplements to get enough:

- **Vitamin B-12**
Many people over age 50 can't absorb enough naturally occurring vitamin B-12 from food. However, they are able to absorb the form of vitamin B-12 that's found in supplements and fortified foods such as breakfast cereals. It's very important for good brain and nervous system function. It also helps to prevent heart disease. Be sure to get 2.4 micrograms per day.
- **Vitamin D**
Older adults, those with dark skin and people who live in northern states may need more vitamin D than what's found in their food. To get the recommended 25 micrograms, or 1,000 International Units (IU), you would need to drink 3 cups of vitamin D fortified milk, 1 cup of vitamin D fortified orange juice **and** 15 micrograms (600 IU) of supplemental vitamin D. Vitamin D is important to preventing osteoporosis, or weak bones.



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