

Day 10: Nutrition

Nutrition

- Proper nutrition is important across all ages. Eating a balanced diet and drinking plenty of water is very important for maintaining a healthy lifestyle.
- Nutrients are required to keep our bones and muscles strong.
- Approximately 30% of older adults living in their homes suffer from malnutrition.
- Dehydration– excessive loss of water in the body, which leads to disruptions in metabolic and bodily processes. At least 75% of seniors are dehydrated!
 - Symptoms dehydration include: thirst, decreased urine volume, abnormally dark urine, unexplained tiredness, irritability, headache, dry mouth, dizziness when standing, insomnia, tingling in limbs, muscles may become spastic, skin may shrivel, vision may dim, urination greatly reduced and may become painful, delirium may begin.
 - Losses greater than 15% are usually fatal.
- Vitamin D and calcium are very important nutrients for promoting and maintaining muscle strength and bone density.
 - Calcium: Adults aged 51-70 should take 1000 to 1200 mg each day of calcium. It is best to consume calcium in what we eat and drink before supplementing. It is important to avoid consuming more than 500 mg of calcium at a time or else our body will flush it out instead of use the nutrients.
 - Vitamin D: Adults over 50 years should consume 800-2000 IU each day of Vitamin D. Vitamin D increases muscle coordination and balance.
- Other important nutrients for the prevention of falls are magnesium, iron, vitamin B12, folic acid, and protein.

What can we do about the fear of falling?

- Drink at least 6 glasses of non-caffeinated beverages each day.
- Ensure that you're getting the correct nutrients each day. Talk to your doctor or a dietician and see if you are in taking in the right amount of important nutrients.
- Refer to Canada's Food Guide for recommended serving sizes.
- Plan your meals each week or month to ensure that you are making balanced and healthy meals.



Day 10: Urinary Incontinence

- There is such urgency associated with a full bladder. When we hold our bladder long enough, we tend to get fairly desperate in search of relief.
- When we rush to get to the toilet, we tend to rush or run, which can lead to a fall.
- When this rushing is combined with home hazards, we are at an even greater risk of falling.

What can we do about incontinence?

- Do not wait until it's too late! Release your bladder and bowels on a timely manner, and before you feel that absolute need to go.
- Talk to your doctor about any bladder infections for a speedy treatment.
- It can be difficult when you rely on someone else to help you to the washroom. Call for assistance before it is very urgent.
- Keep leg muscles strong, so that you can maintain the ability to get to and from, and on and off, a toilet by yourself.
- Consider wearing adult diapers to reduce the stress of waiting for someone to help you. Wearing adults diapers can also help reduce the fear associated with leaks, and can reduce the need to rush to the toilet.
- Seek physiotherapy. 8 out of 10 people who seek help for urinary incontinence can be cured with pelvic floor physiotherapy as compared to a surgical procedure. Physiotherapy may also help you save money– if you are incontinent you could be spending \$5000 per year on incontinent products.
- Know you are not alone. 50% of women are incontinent, 1 in 9 men are incontinent, and 50% of nursing home residents are incontinent.
- In general, avoid excess weight gain, avoid smoking, eat lots of fiber and exercise regularly.
- There is a variety of equipment and/or environmental adaptations that can be added to your lifestyle and home to help those with incontinence:
 - Commodes
 - Nightlights on the route to the bathroom and in the bathroom
 - Non-slip strips on the floor in front of the toilet
 - Grab bars near the toilet
 - Raised toilet seats

