

# Golden Topics

Presented by the experts at Wexner Heritage Village



## March is National Nutrition Month

March is National Nutrition Month and a good time for older adults and their loved ones to assess eating habits and nutritional needs.

Nutrition can be a concern in older adults because many of the senses needed to enjoy food decrease with age including sense of taste, sense of smell and the ability to determine thirst. Other factors can further effect eating habits, such as suffering from diseases, lack of disposable income, effects of medications and the need for help with tasks such as shopping and cooking.

To help older adults combat their unique nutritional issues, experts offer the following tips:

- To combat brittle bones, more calcium (1200 milligrams) and Vitamin D are needed. Vitamin D is made by the body after exposure to the sun. Try to get out for 20-30 minutes, three times each week. Milk fortified with Vitamin D is also good.
- Protein, iron and Vitamin C can all be found in meat. However meat can be expensive and hard for older adults to chew. It is recommended to look to other sources of these nutrients: eggs, beans, peanut butter and fish. Or, try adding small amounts to rice, pasta

### Quick Facts

Dietetic Technicians use the following criteria to **DETERMINE** if someone is at risk for malnutrition due to aging. If you or someone you know fall into a combination of these categories, consider contacting a doctor to assess nutritional needs.

- Disease process
- Eating poorly
- Tooth loss
- Economic hardship
- Reduced social contact
- Multiple medications
- Involuntary weight loss
- Needing assistance with activities of daily living
- Elderly over age 80

and casseroles to make the meat stretch.

- Despite your thirst level, consume 8-12 cups of liquids each day. Water is great, but needed vitamins and nutrients are in milk, juices and soup, so include those in your diet as well.
- Cereals and other foods fortified with Vitamin B12, zinc, folic acid and fiber are also recommended for fighting the effects of aging.

Nutritional needs vary for each person. To develop a plan that's right for you, ask your doctor and consider meeting with a registered dietician.

*Contributing to this article: Harry Wozniak, dietetic technician registered (DTR). Active in practice for six years, he earned his degree in dietetic technology and nutrition from an accredited school of the American Dietetic Association.*



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