

Eat well and stay strong with good nutrition and activity

Eating the right foods promotes good health, strong bones and powerful muscles to reduce the risk of falls. A balanced diet gives us the energy to enjoy our lives and stay independent.

To learn more about a balanced diet for your age and body weight, speak to your doctor or dietitian.

How can I keep my bones and muscles strong?

Diet, physical activity and sunlight are all important. A good diet for bones and muscles includes enough protein, vitamin D and calcium.

Protein is important for healthy muscles and energy. Good sources of protein include lean meat/chicken/fish, eggs, dairy foods, nuts and legumes.

Calcium is important for bone health. Good sources of calcium include milk, yoghurt, cheese, soy milk with added calcium, sardines and salmon with bones.

Vitamin D is important for muscle strength and helps the body use calcium. The best source is sunlight acting on our skin. Food sources include oily fish, fortified foods, liver and supplements.

Physical activity, particularly weight-bearing exercise, strengthens bones and muscles.



What is a balanced daily diet?

For most people, the list below is the minimum amount of each food group for a healthy daily diet. Talk to your doctor or a dietitian about what best suits you.

- > 2 serves of foods that are high in protein (1 serve is 120g meat, chicken or fish, 2 eggs or ½ cup baked beans or 1/3 cup nuts)
- > 3-4 serves of foods that are high in calcium (1 serve is equal to 250ml milk, 200ml yoghurt or 30g cheese)
- > 2 pieces of fruit
- > 5 serves of vegetables (1 serve is 1/2 cup of cooked vegetables)
- > a variety of wholegrain breads and cereals
- > 6 cups fluid of any kind, unless advised otherwise by your doctor.



What can I do to keep my bones and muscles strong?

Physical activity Be active for at least 30 minutes most days. Your doctor, physiotherapist or fitness professional can recommend activities to suit you.

Supplements Ask your doctor or pharmacist for information about calcium and vitamin D supplements that are suitable for you. It can be difficult to get enough Vitamin D through diet and sunlight.

Sun exposure The Cancer Council recommends safe exposure times to sunlight in the early morning and late afternoons.

Do you have a poor appetite? Keep active and eat small meals more often, with snacks in between, such as milkshakes, yoghurt, cheese and crackers. Illness, depression and some medicines can reduce your interest in food. Older people should avoid weight loss, unless advised by a health professional. Talk to your doctor, or ask for a referral to a dietitian if you are concerned about ongoing weight loss.

Is shopping or preparing food difficult? Some supermarkets offer home delivery, or pre-made meals can be delivered by a range of organisations. Ask your local council, health professionals or the Seniors Information Service about these services.

Is chewing food difficult? If you have teeth or gum problems your dentist may be able to help.

Is swallowing difficult or are you coughing when eating or drinking? Your doctor can refer you to a speech pathologist for assessment.

Who can help?

- > Your Doctor, who can also refer you to a Geriatrician; or a Dietitian, Physiotherapist or Speech Pathologist through the Enhanced Primary Care program; or the Department of Veterans Affairs (if you are eligible).
- > Dietitian: To locate a dietitian near you: phone Commonwealth Carelink 1800 052 222, Yellow Pages or www.daa.asn.au
- > Your Dentist
- > Seniors Information Service: 08 8168 8776 (1800 636 368 in country SA)
- > Osteoporosis Australia: 08 8379 5711
- > Cancer Council Helpline. 13 11 20 for information about safe sun exposure or www.cancer.org.au/positionVitD
- > Councils: For information on shopping assistance and home support.

For more information

Northern Adelaide Local Health Network
Central Adelaide Local Health Network
Community Falls Prevention Team
PO Box 508, Prospect East SA 5082
Telephone: 1300 0 FALLS (1300 0 32557)
<http://www.sahealth.sa.gov.au/safetyandquality>



<http://www.gilf.gov.au/>



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