

# Nutrition News

## Information for Senior Citizens

*Developed by Colorado State University Extension  
Department of Food Science & Human Nutrition*

### Go Ahead -- Eat Between Meals!

Have you ever heard someone say, "You shouldn't eat between meals"? Usually, it meant that you'd gain weight if you did. But many doctors and scientists have changed their thinking about snacking between meals. Here are some reasons why:

- Some people can't eat large meals; snacks can help them get enough calories.
- Snacking helps you get all the servings you need from MyPyramid.
- Snacking can help you get high-fiber and mineral-rich foods at different times, so the fiber doesn't interfere with digestion of the minerals.

Of course, this doesn't mean it's all right to overeat. But, if you prefer small meals, you can divide up your Pyramid servings into as many meals and snacks as you like. Try eating three meals and two snacks a day.

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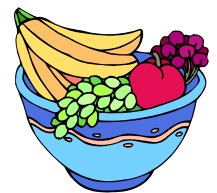
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If you want to add snacks to your daily meal plan, but you don't usually eat snacks, make sure to decrease the size of your meals to compensate for the calories obtained from the snack. Also, be sure to choose snacks that are low in fat, sugar and sodium. Snacks can help you increase variety in your diet and prevent you from over eating because you won't be starving when supper time finally rolls around.

Need some ideas! All of the foods listed below would make a great snack.

- Bran muffin
- Fresh fruit
- Raw veggie sticks
- String cheese
- Whole wheat bagel
- Rice cakes
- Low-fat yogurt
- Dried fruit
- Fig bars or gingersnaps
- Cottage cheese
- Nuts or trail mix

Snack foods are fun to take on outings. Do you like to visit the museum, library, or the zoo (perhaps with grandchildren)? Why not purchase an inexpensive backpack--large enough to hold a sweater, a plastic leak proof water bottle, and a few snacks from the list above.



You will see new sights, get some exercise, and you won't have to eat expensive, high-fat foods from the museum cafeteria.

## Making Smart Choices When Eating Out

Can high-fat, high-sodium foods be avoided when eating out?

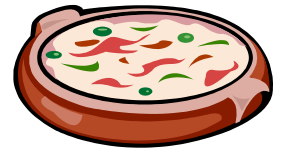
Yes, with some careful ordering, even eating out can be healthy. Some restaurants offer menu items that are low in fat, cholesterol and sodium. In addition, if the menu makes any sort of health claim, such as low fat, the restaurant is required by the FDA to have nutrition information for the menu item on hand. So, ask your server for a copy before ordering.

Even if a restaurant doesn't have specific menu items that are low fat, ask your server if substitutions can be made or if components can be left off. Use the tips below to help make your dining experience a healthy one.

- Ask for condiments such as salad dressing and mayonnaise to be served on the side. This way you can use only what you need.
- Ask for reduced-sugar syrup and reduced-fat salad dressing.
- Ask Chinese restaurants to prepare your meal without MSG (monosodium glutamate).
- Ask if menu items that are fried can be baked instead.
- Ask for plain bread or bread sticks instead of garlic bread.
- Stay away from alfredo or cream sauces—order marinara instead.
- Ask for a to-go-box for half of your meal to help prevent you from overeating.

- Choose menu items made with lean meats such as chicken or ham instead of pepperoni or ground beef.
- Choose meats that are baked, broiled, or grilled instead of fried.
- Ask for cottage cheese, plain yogurt or salsa instead of butter and sour cream to top your baked potato.
- Order your eggs poached instead of fried, or ask that your omelet be made with egg substitute.
- Ask for a side salad or fruit instead of French fries, or grits instead of hash browns.

Everyone loves to eat pizza once in a while. But, have you ever thought what you order on your pizza can make a big difference in the number of calories and fat you will eat? Compare the nutrition facts for the two pizzas below:



- **1/4 of a 15" cheese pizza:**  
750 calories,  
22 grams fat,  
130 mg cholesterol,  
1,400 mg sodium
- **1/4 of a 15" pepperoni pizza:**  
950 calories,  
45 grams fat,  
170 mg cholesterol,  
1,650 mg sodium

Choosing the cheese pizza saves you 200 calories, 23 grams of fat, plus some sodium and cholesterol. If you're careful with your fat budget and your sodium the rest of the week, pizza is a good way to get servings of bread and calcium. Adding vegetables to the cheese pizza won't add any fat or a substantial amount of calories to your meal and will help you meet MyPyramid recommendations.

## Snack Attack

To maintain a high energy level and good nutrition, try these great combos to keep you going:

- Bake or microwave small, new potatoes. Eat cold or hot, with balsamic vinegar or non-fat sour cream.
- Warm a flour tortilla to soften, spread with 1/4 cup unsweetened applesauce, fold to eat.
- 1/2 cup raw cauliflower or broccoli chunks dipped in 2 Tbsp reduced-fat ranch-type dressing.
- If you have a blender, put in 1 cup plain yogurt, 1/2 cup pineapple juice, and 1 small banana and blend till smooth.
- Bran muffin with a small glass of skim milk.
- Half a bagel topped with a slice of melted, reduced-fat cheese.
- Crackers and a cup of fruit-flavored yogurt.
- Tortilla rolled up with cheese and salsa.
- Low-fat fruit flavored yogurt with reduced-fat granola.
- Pasta and steamed vegetables, lightly sprinkled with Parmesan cheese.
- Toasted English muffin topped with lean turkey and tomato slice, paired with one cup of apple juice.
- Granola bar and an apple.
- Pita bread with hummus (chickpea dip) and your favorite fruit.
- Pretzels with honey-flavored mustard, carrot sticks, and a cup of cranberry juice.
- Low-fat cottage cheese and canned peaches in light syrup.
- Whole-wheat toast peanut butter and a small glass of milk.

## Resources

In Colorado, contact your local county Cooperative Extension office for many free or low-cost services and education programs. You can also ask for a free copy of the Colorado State University's Publications Catalog, listing various nutrition information offered. In addition, check out CSU Cooperative Extension's web site for publications and fact sheets, <http://www.ext.colostate.edu/pubs/foodnut/pubfood.html>. In other states, call your area Cooperative Extension office for information.

And remember to dial the *American Dietetic Association* Hotline. Messages (in Spanish and English) change monthly. Among their many services is their free *Determine Your Nutritional Health* checklist in Spanish or English. It's a quick and easy way to find out if you or someone you know is at nutritional risk. Dial 1-800-366-1655.

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**Dining out is fun, and it shouldn't be avoided; snacking between meals is a good idea for lots of reasons. You can do both and still follow the Dietary Guidelines, and get all the servings you need from MyPyramid!**

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### A timely tip—

Would you like to find out about exercise programs especially for older people? Hearing aid specialists? Social Security benefits? The NIA (National Institute on Aging) has a *Resource Directory for Older People* to answer commonly asked questions. For a free copy, call weekdays between 10:30 a.m. and 7:00 p.m. (mountain time) at 1-800-222-2225, or check out the online version: <http://www.nia.nih.gov/HealthInformation/ResourceDirectory.htm>.

## Fitness Focus: Back Flexibility

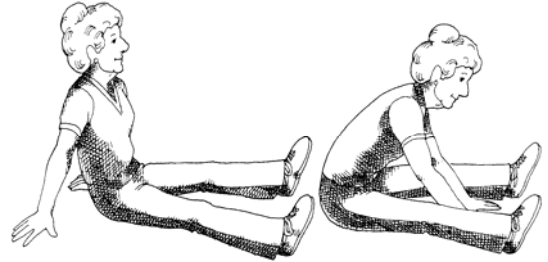
Back flexibility is often neglected and can be a cause of stiffness and aches. Good flexibility can help reduce backaches and can help decrease your chances of injury when doing strengthening exercises. Be sure you have a thorough physical and discuss new exercises with your doctor before beginning a new exercise program.



1.



2.



3.

**1. Double Knee Pull:** *to stretch lower back and buttocks.* Lie on back, hands at sides. Pull both legs to chest, lock arms around legs, pull buttocks slightly off ground. Hold for 10 to 15 counts. Suggested repetitions: 3 - 5.

**2. Seated Pike Stretch:** *to stretch lower back and hamstrings.* Sit on floor, legs extended forward, knees together. Exhale and stretch forward, slowly sliding hands down to ankles. Touch chin to knees, keeping legs as straight as possible. Hold for 5 to 8 counts. Don't bounce. Return to starting position inhaling deeply. Suggested repetitions: 3 - 5.

**3. Sitting Stretch:** *to increase flexibility of lower back and hamstrings.* Sit on floor, legs extended shoulder-width apart. Place hands on floor at sides for support. Stretch forward slowly and extend arms between legs. Hold for 3 to 5 counts. Suggested repetitions: 3 - 5.

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### **Senior Resource: Can the Social Security Office answer my questions about the food stamp program? Who benefits from the food stamp program?**

The staff in the Social Security Office are trained to help and to answer questions related to all the social security programs. They can provide you with a food stamp application and answer any questions you may have.

The food stamp program is designed to help families afford food. However, when you use food stamps, farmers sell more produce, grocers sell more food, and the whole community benefits.

For more information and to find out if you or someone you know qualifies for food stamps, call 1-800-221-5689.