

New Beginnings Monthly Flyer

Published by
Towson University and
The Heart Institute at
St. Joseph Medical Center

Towson University Wellness Center

March 2008

Food Guide Pyramid Modified for Older Adults' Needs

Adapted from Tufts University Health & Nutrition Letter

For individuals age 70 or older, nutrition needs are different than those for 25 or even 50 year olds. The Modified Food Guide Pyramid for Older Adults corresponds with the recommendations illustrated in the new USDA food pyramid, MyPyramid. It reflects both the need for fewer calories as well the need for higher levels of nutrients for optimal health among older adults.

Slowing metabolisms and reduced physical activity lessen the body's need for high caloric intake. Nevertheless, high nutrient levels are necessary if older adults are to ensure good health and well-being. Recommended food choices come from the following categories:

- Whole enriched and fortified grains and cereals such as brown rice and 100% whole wheat bread.
- Bright-colored vegetables such as carrots and broccoli.
- Deep-colored fruit such as berries and melon.
- Low and non-fat dairy products such as yogurt and low-lactose milk.
- Dry beans and nuts, fish, poultry, lean meat and eggs.
- Liquid vegetable oils and soft spreads low in saturated and trans fat.

The Modified Pyramid includes icons of packaged and frozen fruits and vegetables as viable substitutions for fresh produce. "These choices are just as nutritious, easier to prepare and have a longer shelf life, minimizing waste," says Alice H. Lichtenstein, DSc, director of the Cardiovascular Nutrition Laboratory at Tufts' Jean Mayer USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging. For older adults, this should be of particular interest especially since an arthritic or home-bound adult is less likely to grocery shop weekly and less likely to keep fresh produce on hand.

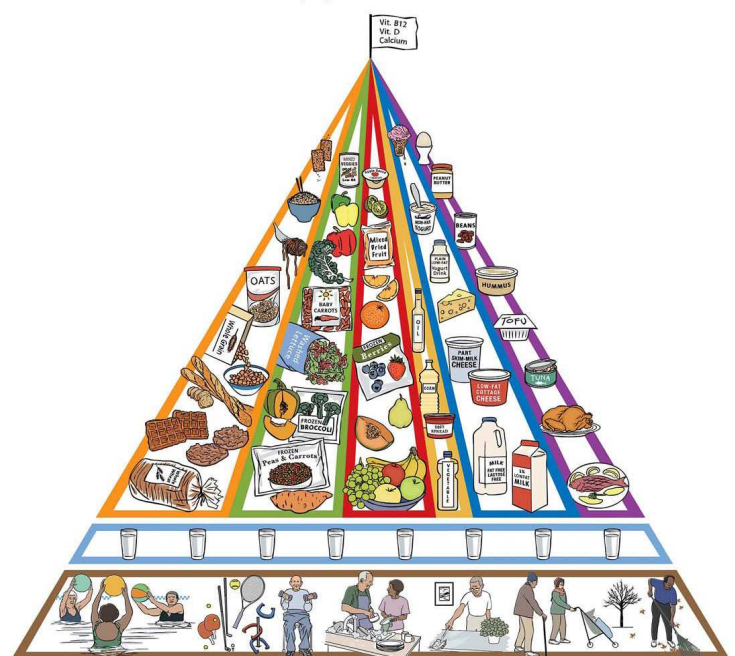
The Modified Pyramid also emphasizes the importance of consuming adequate amounts of fiber, which means plenty of whole grains rather than refined forms and whole fruits and vegetables rather than juices. The importance of supplemental nutrients is also emphasized and symbolized with the addition of a flag

at the top of the pyramid. This visually reminds us of the need for calcium, vitamin D and vitamin B12 as we age. Adequate intake can be hard to achieve with food alone, so supplementation may be needed.

Hydration and fluid intake is yet another consideration that is often overlooked and should be defined. The problem being that as we age there can be a disassociation between how hydrated our bodies are and how thirsty we feel. Therefore, the modified pyramid stresses the importance of consuming fluids by having a row of glasses as its foundation. If water isn't the way you prefer to meet your fluid recommendations, vegetable juice and foods with high water content, such as lettuce and celery can be important contributors.

Below the glasses is a new row of icons stressing the importance of physical activity. "Regular physical activity is linked to reduced risk of chronic disease and lower body weights," says Lichtenstein. Studies report obesity in adults 70 years and older is increasing. Stay active to control weight gain and improve quality of life.

Modified MyPyramid for Older Adults



Happy St. Patrick's Day!



Monday, March 17

Spring Challenge

American Idol is inspiring TUWC participants to achieve greatness!



Perform your best during the challenge and you could become the **TUWC Idol!!!**

Beginning Monday, April 14
Ending Friday, May 9.

Happy Easter!



Sunday, March 23

Men As Well As Women Need Bone Tests

Adapted from the Associated Press

New guidelines for older men are calling for older men to get routine checks for bone-thinning osteoporosis. Traditionally thought of as a woman's condition, men are being increasingly evaluated for bone building treatment because like women they also may have risk factors predisposing them to thinning bones. Postmenopausal women are still at greatest risk of osteoporosis, when bone-strengthening estrogen plummets, but a quarter of hip fractures occur in men, and as men live longer, the number who break a hip is steadily rising.

A new tool has been added to bone density testing to determine whether someone is at increased risk of breaking a bone in the upcoming years. This tool uses the factors that have been found to play the biggest role in an individual's odds of thinning bones as they age. Breaking a bone during adulthood that's not the result of, say, a bad car crash is one risk factor. A parent who broke a hip suggests a genetic risk. Smoking also thins bones as does heavy alcohol consumption and long-term use of steroid-containing medicines. This information plus a patient's score from a bone-density measurement of the hip provides a better indication of what treatment or testing should be performed based on his or her risk.

The biggest change to the National Osteoporosis Foundation guidelines is the new recommendation that bone-mineral density X-ray test be performed on all men 70 and older, just like women 65 and older have long been urged to get. In addition to this change, the guidelines also recommend:

- Postmenopausal women and men 50 and older who have thinning bones, but not osteoporosis yet, be treated if they have at least a 20 percent risk of any major fracture in the next decade, or at least a 3 percent risk of a hip fracture.
- Checks for osteoporosis risk factors in postmenopausal women and men 50 and over, to see who needs a bone test before their senior years.
- A bone test for anyone who has any type of fracture after age 50, or who has conditions associated with bone loss, such as rheumatoid arthritis.
- For adults over 50, 1,200 milligrams a day of calcium and 800 to 1,000 international units of Vitamin D, more Vitamin D than the government recommends.
- Do regular weight-bearing and muscle-strengthening exercise.

March Lectures and Activities



Friday, March 7 @ 10:30 am → Lecture: "Reading Food Labels," with Jen Eickhoff



Wednesday, March 12 @ 10:00 am → Lecture: "Eating for a Faster Metabolism," with Christine Woods



Monday, March 17, @ 10:00 am → Activity: Nutrition Bingo



Friday, March 21 @ 10:30 am → Lecture: "Assessing Body Composition" with Jen Eickhoff



Friday, March 28 @ 12:00 pm → Lecture: "Skin Cancer; Signs/Symptoms/ Treatment & Diagnosis," presented by Practicum in Exercise Science Students