

MAKING HEALTHY CHOICES FOR SENIORS: WEEK 8

Don't forget dairy

Many foods made from dairy can be a great source of calcium and other nutrients.

Calcium helps build and maintain strong bones. Seniors should eat or drink foods that supply calcium to maintain bone strength. As we grow older, we produce less of the enzyme needed to digest lactose (the sugar found in dairy products). If you find that dairy products cause issues, consider asking your doctor about lactase supplements and probiotics. Also, include other sources of calcium in your diet, such as leafy greens and white beans.

The dairy food group includes milk and milk products that keep their calcium content such as yogurt and cheese. Milk products, such as cream cheese, cream and butter, that do not retain their calcium content are not considered a part of the dairy food group. However, nondairy milk products such as soymilk are considered part of the dairy food group.

Just add fruit

Many dairy products, such as yogurt, ice cream or cottage cheese, come with added fruit and fruit flavoring that is made with added sugar. Look at the food label to find out how much sugar has been added. A simple way to avoid this added sugar is to add flavor and sweetness to plain dairy products with fresh fruit such as strawberries and blueberries.

Many of these products also come in prepackaged options for convenience. Save money and eliminate added sugar by buying a larger size of a plain variety and making your own convenience servings at home by dividing food in the larger container into single serving cups or baggies.

Daily dairy recommendations

Adults should consume 3 servings (cup equivalents) from the dairy group each day. As with the protein and grain groups, a cup equivalent is one serving. Serving sizes are not the same for all types of foods because different foods contain different amounts of nutrients. (For more information on what equals a cup-equivalent, visit www.choosemyplate.gov.) For example, 1 cup of milk counts as one serving but 2 slices of Swiss cheese also counts as one serving. Meeting a daily recommendation of three servings could look like this: 1 cup (8 ounces) of milk, ½ cup of yogurt, 1 slice of parmesan cheese, ¾ cup ice cream



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Did you know?

You can get calcium from other sources besides the dairy food group. Green leafy vegetables, such as collards, spinach and turnip greens, are all considered good sources of calcium. Other sources of calcium include canned fish with bones, such as salmon or sardines, calcium-fortified orange juice, almonds, white beans and navy beans.



WEEKLY RECIPE

Remember to wash your hands and prepare food safely.

Yogurt Parfait (serves 1)

1. Start with **1 cup of nonfat vanilla yogurt**. Add half of it to a cup or bowl.
2. You'll need **1 cup of fruit** – fresh, frozen or canned. Drain canned fruit. Let frozen fruit thaw in the fridge a little if it's too hard to eat right away.
3. Add ½ of the fruit to the first layer of yogurt.
4. Create another layer with the rest of the yogurt. Then top with the rest of the fruit.
5. Top with **¼ cup of granola**.



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For more information or to join a class, visit www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/. To find your local county office, visit www.canr.msu.edu/outreach/county.

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