

Change your Diet

It's never too late to make lifestyle changes that positively impact our health. As people age, diets become increasingly important to lessen the risks of disease by eating nutritious items.

If you're unfamiliar with what it takes to create a well-balanced menu, you should start by asking your general practitioner for a referral to a quality nutritionist.

Based on your health and diet, they can recommend a plan that works specifically for you. Check with your health care provider to ensure their services are covered by your insurance. Here are some basic tips to get you started toward clean eating from the National Council on Aging.

Use MyPlate

Do you remember the food pyramid that the United States Department of Agriculture introduced to America in 1992? While it served as an efficient guide to help people understand the important nutrients they needed, in 2011, the MyPlate system was created.

While it stays true to the importance of fruits, vegetables and protein, the new guide makes it sim-

pler to visualize how much of each should be eaten. Check it out before changing up your diet toward better health.

Variety of Nutrients

In addition to sticking to the proper serving levels of different nutrients, the National Council on Aging also recommends that a plate should contain bright, colored foods as they contain important vitamins.

Make sure to check the Nutrition Facts label and ensure it is packed with nutrients and low on fat, sugar and sodium. Discuss your new eating plan with your doctor or nutritionist to discover what your body needs and what you should avoid based on your health.



Stick to Recommended Servings

Even healthy foods should be eaten with a serving limit in mind. Check out these new guidelines from the American Heart Association for people over 60 years of age: five servings of vegetables per day; four servings of fruit per day; and eight to nine servings of meat per week.

Activities with Limited Mobility

While there are many health disorders that can affect your mobility and energy, you shouldn't be discouraged from engaging in more stationary activities.

If it's difficult to stay physically active, challenging your mind can have great health benefits to your cognitive health.

According to the National Institutes on Aging, simple activities like reading, photography and learning a new skill can improve your memory and ability to think. If you're struggling to find

activities to occupy your time, consider partaking in some of these beneficial activities.

Reading

A great way to spend time indoors during the crisp autumn temperatures is in the company of a good book. Whether you're aiming to improve your knowledge on a subject or inspiring creativity by delving into a nonfiction read, the organization Reading Partners suggests reading is a proven way to reduce stress, combat mental decline and increase empathy. The mental benefits of enjoying a story or article are something to take advantage of.

Volunteer at a Local Charity

Contributing monetary donations is a great way to feel a sense of accomplishment and help a worthy cause. Volunteering your time can be even more beneficial. Look around your community for organizations who

need help to enhance their mission. You can look for jobs like serving at a food shelter, reading to children and preparing community events to raise money.

Play Challenging Games

Challenge and improve your mental skills by participating in puzzle solving games. You can typically find difficult crossword puzzles or sudoku challenges within your daily newspaper. When using a pencil to complete these activities is too difficult, consider investing in a touchscreen tablet and download challenging apps that are easier to play.

Take in the Local Arts Scene

Enhance your culture by absorbing art contributions from your local artists or by visiting different museums in your own region. Familiarize yourself with different techniques, and styles like abstract, realism and impressionism.

Become a part of the local art community where you can build significant relationships with other enthusiasts or collectors. Don't be afraid to try your hand at creating your own masterpiece. Look around your area for painting or art lessons and ask the peers you find navigating art galleries about local classes.

