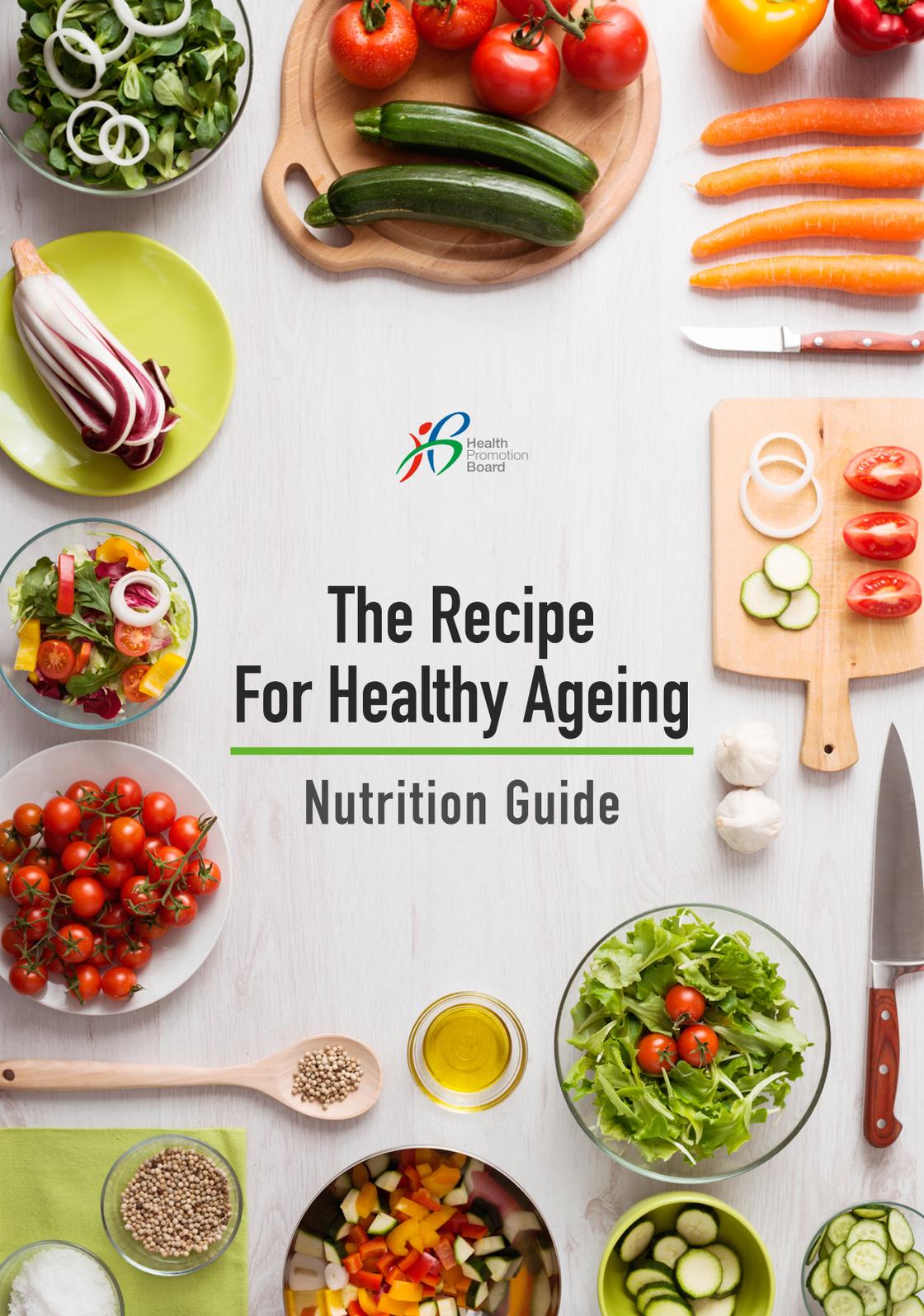




# The Recipe For Healthy Ageing

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## Nutrition Guide



# Eating For Healthy Ageing

As you age, maintaining a healthy, balanced diet becomes more important. The recipe for healthy ageing starts with nutrient-dense foods.



## Quality vs. Quantity

Why nutrient-dense foods? Your metabolism slows down with age and you will require less energy from food. However, in some cases nutrient needs may be higher. Go for lean meats, and cut back on food high in added sugar and salt. Consider portion sizes and ensure a balanced and varied diet as guided by My Healthy Plate.



**Choose Healthier Choice Symbol (HCS) products where possible.** HCS products are healthier compared to similar products.



## What's on My Healthy Plate:

- Fill half of your plate with fruit and vegetables
- Fill a quarter of your plate with wholegrains
- Fill a quarter of your plate with meat and others
- Choose water
- Use healthier oils
- Be active

# 01

## Have Meat, Fish, Or Tofu In Every Meal

Foods such as meat, fish, chicken, eggs, tofu, and lentils provide protein that builds and repairs the body. **As you age, including sufficient good quality protein in your diet can help maintain physical function and reduce muscle loss.** It can also help with healing if you have been sick or have had surgery. Choose low fat alternatives such as lean meat, fish, chicken without skin, and low-fat dairy products.

**Have 3 servings of meat and others every day. Examples of 1 serving are:**



1 palm sized piece of lean meat, fish or poultry (90g)



2 glasses\* of low-fat milk/soy milk (500ml)



2 small blocks of tofu (170g)



5 medium prawns (90g)



$\frac{3}{4}$  cup\*\* of cooked pulses (peas, beans, lentils) (120g)



3 eggs (150g)

All weights listed are for edible portions only.

\* 250ml glass

\*\* 250ml cup

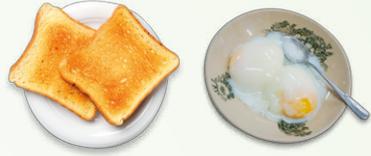
## Breakfast foods

*Instead of:*



Jam or butter on toast

 *Have:*



Eggs with wholegrain toast



Porridge with pickled and/or salted vegetables



Porridge with peanuts and tofu



Fried bee hoon



Fried bee hoon with egg



Oats made with water and condensed milk



Oats made with low-fat high-calcium milk/soybean milk with HCS

## Lunch and Dinner foods

***Instead of:***



Vegetable soup

 ***Have:***



Lean chicken and  
Vegetable soup



Fried Rice



Economic Rice  
(fish and vegetables)



Vegetable Curry with Rice



Tempeh and Lentil  
Vegetable Curry with Rice



**“Lentils, beans and tempeh are high in protein.”**

***Instead of:***



Porridge with Pickled and/or Salted Vegetables

 ***Have:***



Porridge and Sardines with HCS



Fried bee hoon



Bee hoon soup with fish slices

## Beverages

***Instead of:***



Milo, Ovaltine, Horlicks, cereal drink, coffee, tea made with water

 ***Have:***



Milo, Ovaltine, Horlicks, cereal drink, coffee, tea made with low-fat high-calcium milk/soybean milk with HCS

# 02

## Bone Up On Calcium

Bones should last for life, but adults over the age of 50 are at a higher risk of losing bone mass faster than it can be replaced. That's why calcium is so important. Inadequate intake of calcium can lead to osteoporosis – a disease that makes bones fragile and more likely to fracture. So, do not neglect strengthening them. Calcium also helps muscles and nerves work properly, helps blood to clot, and regulates enzyme activity.



Include calcium rich foods such as milk, yoghurt, cheese, tofu, sardines and calcium-fortified soymilk. Choose low-fat dairy products to help maintain a healthy weight.

**Use our consumption guide to fulfil your daily calcium intake:**

Have a variety of the following foods to keep your bones strong. **Aim for 10 calcium stars a day!**

**1 calcium ★ = 100mg of calcium**  
**Daily requirement (51 years old and above) is**  
**1000mg of calcium**

**How to plan for 10 stars in a day**

**Breakfast:**

1 glass of high-calcium low-fat milk  
250ml



**Lunch:**

1 square piece of taukwa



+

¾ mug of chye sim



**Dinner:**

¾ mug of kai lan



**Calcium Stars**  
(per item)



1 glass of low-fat high-calcium milk (250ml) / 4 scoops milk powder



1 glass of soybean milk with HCS (250ml)



**Calcium Stars**  
(per item)



2 tablespoons of non-fried dried ikan bilis (40g)



1 piece of canned low sodium sardine (70g)



**Calcium Stars  
(per item)**



$\frac{3}{4}$  mug of  
cooked  
kai lan  
(100g)



1 slice of  
low-fat  
cheese  
(20g)



1 small tub  
of low-fat  
yoghurt  
(100-150g)



**Calcium Stars  
(per item)**



1 square piece  
of taukwa  
(100g)



1 cup of  
Edamame  
(200g)



2 tablespoons of  
roasted sesame  
seeds (20g)



$\frac{3}{4}$  mug of cooked  
chye sim (100g)



$\frac{3}{4}$  mug of cooked  
spinach (100g)



**Calcium Stars  
(per item)**



1  $\frac{1}{2}$  mugs of cooked  
broccoli (200g)



$\frac{1}{2}$  pack of tofu  
(150g)



$\frac{1}{4}$  cup of almonds (30g)

**“Did you know? You can get sufficient vitamin D by being out in the sun 15-30 minutes every day. Vitamin D helps to absorb calcium.”**



# 03

## Fill Up On Wholegrains, Fruit and Vegetables

Wholegrains, fruit and vegetables are rich in vitamins and minerals. They help to strengthen the body's immune system and have a protective effect against heart disease, stroke and certain types of cancers.

Wholegrains, fruit and vegetables also contain both soluble and insoluble fibres. Soluble fibre can help lower blood cholesterol levels while insoluble fibre promotes healthy bowel functions.





Include at least one wholegrain staple food like wholemeal bread, brown rice or oats every day. **Have 2 servings of fruit and 2 servings of vegetables daily.** Different fruit and vegetables are rich in different nutrients, so eat a variety for maximum health benefits.

### What is an example of 1 serving of Fruit?



1 small apple, orange, pear or mango (130g)



1 wedge of papaya, pineapple or watermelon (130g)



10 grapes/ longans (50g)



1 medium banana



¼ cup\*\* of dried fruit (40g)



1 glass\* of pure fruit juice (250ml)

# What is an example of 1 serving of Vegetables?



¼ round plate<sup>+</sup> of cooked vegetables



150g of raw leafy vegetables



100g of raw non-leafy vegetables



¾ mug<sup>\*\*\*</sup> of cooked leafy vegetables (100g)



¾ mug<sup>\*\*\*</sup> of cooked non-leafy vegetables (100g)

All weights listed are for edible portions only.

\* 250ml glass

\*\* 250ml cup

\*\*\* 250ml mug

+ 10 inch plate

**“An apple a day may not keep the doctor away, but it provides about 15% of the daily recommended amount of fibre.”**



# 04

## Lighten Up On Salt

Many of us love salty food and reducing our salt intake is a challenge for Singaporeans, especially those who often eat out. However, our taste buds will adapt when we reduce our salt intake slowly.

**“Salt is sodium plus chloride. Both are minerals. Salt is made up of 40% sodium and 60% chloride.”**



**Daily limit of sodium is 2000mg =  
1 teaspoon (5g) salt or  
2 tablespoons (30g) light soy sauce**

Excessive sodium intake can lead to high blood pressure also known as hypertension. High blood pressure is a risk factor for stroke, heart and kidney disease. We get sodium from:



- What is found naturally in food
- What is added during the processing of food
- What we add when cooking
- What we add at the table

# Season your food naturally

Fresh foods are naturally low in sodium and contain a natural taste enhancer called glutamate. Glutamate-rich foods such as meat, chicken, fish, peas, tomatoes, corn and mushrooms can be included in daily meals to provide natural flavouring without the need to add salt and sauces.

Alternatively, use fresh or dried herbs such as parsley, coriander, onion, garlic, chives or spring onions and spices such as cinnamon, cardamom, cumin, pepper, curry leaves and chilli to enhance a dish without increasing its salt content. You can also flavour your food with lemon, lime or orange juice.



# Go for low-sodium food options

## When eating out

- Ask for sauces to be served on the side. Taste food first, try not to add more salt or sauces at the table.
- Do not add gravy on your rice.
- Avoid drinking up all the soup in soup dishes as they contain a lot of sodium.



## When shopping

- Buy fresh foods over processed, canned or cured foods.
- Choose items that are lower in sodium or carry the Healthier Choice Symbol (HCS).

# Shopping list



Choose Healthier Choice Symbol Products where possible. Products with the HCS usually contain less total fat, saturated fat, sodium and sugar and may pack more dietary fibre, calcium and wholegrains compared to similar food products.

## **Include meat, fish or tofu**

Provide protein essential for maintaining physical function and reducing muscle loss.

- Lean meat and poultry - remove skins and visible fat
- Fresh or frozen fish
- Eggs
- Tofu, taukwa, tempeh, beans and lentils
- Low-fat milk, low-fat cheese
- Low-fat yoghurt

## **Bone up on calcium**

Maintain or build bone strength, muscle and nerve health.

- Low-fat milk
- Low-fat cheese
- Low-fat yoghurt
- High-calcium soybean milk
- Ikan bilis
- Sardines

## Fill up on wholegrains, fruits & vegetables

Strengthens body's immune system and protects against diseases.

### Wholegrains

- Brown rice, wholemeal bread, wholemeal noodles, brown rice bee hoon, chapati
- Wholewheat biscuits and crackers
- Oats

### Fruit

- Any kind of fresh fruit

### Vegetables

- Any kind of fresh or frozen vegetables

## Lighten up on salt

Helps reduce risk of high blood pressure, stroke, heart and kidney disease.

- Herbs and spices

### Others

- Oils and margarine
- Water
- No sugar or reduced sugar drinks

# 05

## Additional Dietary Information

You may experience changes in your attitude and preference towards food as you get older, resulting in poor appetite. Sometimes, medicine can also affect the way you eat or taste your food.

**Here are some tips to help you eat better:**

### **What if I don't feel like eating?**

- Use herbs and spices to improve the taste of your food.
- Make meals enjoyable by eating with loved ones.
- Eat smaller meals more often.

### **What if I have difficulty chewing?**

- Soften brown rice and wholemeal bread by:
  - soaking 1 cup of brown rice in 2 ½ cups of water for half an hour before cooking. Add more water when cooking.
  - dipping bread in a drink or having porridge instead of rice.
- Choose soft fruit like papaya, banana or watermelon.
- Chop vegetables into smaller pieces and cook them

longer. Carrots, pumpkin, cauliflower and leafy green vegetables (without the stalk) can be prepared this way.

- Replace meat chunks with tofu, eggs, minced meat and fish.

**If your dentures give you problems, visit your dentist for a check-up.**



**See a doctor if...**

- You have a persistent cough or feel pain when swallowing.
- You lose weight without trying or intending to.
- Your appetite has been poor over a few days.

## **What if I already have high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease or any other chronic diseases?**

Most people can follow the healthy diet tips listed here even if they are living with a chronic disease. Consult a doctor or dietitian for more specific advice before making dietary changes.

## **Can I eat beans and bean products if I have gout?**

You may be able to consume beans and bean products depending on the severity of your condition. It is best to see a doctor for more specific advice.

# 06

## Supplements

### **What if I want to take or am already taking supplements?**

Vitamin and mineral supplements do not replace a healthy diet but as a person gets older, some vitamin and mineral supplements may help especially when one is unable to maintain a varied and balanced diet.



### **When you take health supplements**

Consult a doctor before using health supplements such as vitamin and mineral supplements, ginkgo, soy isoflavones and glucosamine. Unnecessary health supplements may do more harm than good. Some supplements can change the way medicine works.

## **When choosing health supplements, keep in mind that:**

- More is not always better. Vitamin and mineral supplements like vitamin A, vitamin C or calcium can help but taking too much can hurt. Consult a doctor for advice on how much supplements should be taken.
- “Natural” does not always mean safe. For example, royal jelly can cause allergic reactions in some people and too many calcium tablets can cause constipation.

## **What if I do not drink milk or eat foods rich in calcium?**

You may want to consider taking calcium and vitamin D supplements. Recommended dosages are 800mg calcium and 800 IU vitamin D for ages 51 and older.

## **What if I don't feel like eating and lose weight without meaning to?**

You might benefit from oral nutritional supplements and high-calorie and/or high-protein snacks to boost your nutritional intake.

Consult a doctor or a dietitian to determine the cause of weight loss and the required treatment. Your dietitian will be able to provide a nutritional assessment and make recommendations on how best to make changes to your diet to meet your nutritional needs.

**“Always consult your doctor or dietitian before starting any oral nutrition supplements or health supplements.”**





For more information,  
contact HealthLine **1800 223 1313**  
or visit **[healthyageing.sg/nutrition](http://healthyageing.sg/nutrition)**

An initiative under the Action Plan  
for Successful Ageing