

# Vitamins, Minerals and Finding Information You Can Trust



SeniorsBC



Provincial Health  
Services Authority  
Province-wide solutions.  
Better health.

# Today's Session

1

**What vitamins and minerals do seniors need to think about?**

- Vitamins B12 and B6
- Calcium and Vitamin D
- Iron and Magnesium
- Vitamin C and E
- Multivitamins

2

**How do you know if you're getting reliable information?**

3

**Activity: Thinking Critically about Nutrition**

# Healthy Eating Quiz

## TRUE OR FALSE?

- 1 All seniors need a calcium supplement.
- 2 You can never take too much vitamin C.
- 3 Herbal supplements must be safe because they're natural.







Are you concerned about getting  
enough vitamins and minerals?





# Rule of thumb

**The best way to get the vitamins and minerals you need is by eating a variety of healthy foods recommended in Canada's Food Guide.**



# What vitamins and minerals are important for healthy aging?

- **Vitamins B12 and B6**
- **Calcium and Vitamin D**
- **Iron and Magnesium**
- **Vitamins C and E**





# Why do we need vitamin B12?

- Forms healthy red blood cells
- Keeps your nerves working properly
- Helps you feel energetic and alert
- Deficiency can make you feel weak and tired



**The body's ability to absorb vitamin B12 decreases as we age.**

# Sources of B12

## **Found in foods:**

- meat, fish and poultry
- eggs
- milk, yogurt and cheese

## **Added to foods (fortified):**

- veggie meats
- breakfast cereals
- soy beverages



**Make sure you are getting enough vitamin B12 by eating fortified foods or taking a daily multivitamin/mineral supplement. Talk to your healthcare provider or a dietitian.**



# Why do we need vitamin B6?

- Carries oxygen through the blood
- Helps your body to make and use protein
- Promotes growth and repair
- Helps regulate blood sugar (glucose) levels



**The body's ability to absorb vitamin B6 decreases as we age.**

# Sources of vitamin B6

- Meat, chicken, fish and organ meats
- Bananas, green beans, sweet potatoes and other starchy vegetables
- Whole grains and fortified cereals
- Lentils, chickpeas and sunflower seeds



**Make sure you are getting enough vitamin B6 by eating a variety of healthy foods or taking a daily multivitamin/mineral supplement. Talk to your healthcare provider or a dietitian.**



# Why do we need calcium?

- **Builds bones and keeps them strong**
- **Maintains healthy and strong teeth**
- **Prevents muscle weakness and falls**
- **Helps prevent osteoporosis**



# Sources of calcium

- **Milk and milk products**
  - Yogurt, cheese and kefir
- **Firm and extra-firm tofu made with calcium**
- **Salmon and sardines with bones**
- **Almonds and almond butter**
- **Sesame seeds and sesame butter (tahini)**
- **Fortified milk alternatives like soy and rice beverages**







Can you take too much calcium?



# Caution with calcium

- **Too much calcium from supplements may increase health risks**
- **It is best to get calcium through food when possible**



Talk with your healthcare professional or a dietitian to help you determine if you are getting enough calcium, whether you need a calcium supplement and how much you should take.

# Why do we need vitamin D?

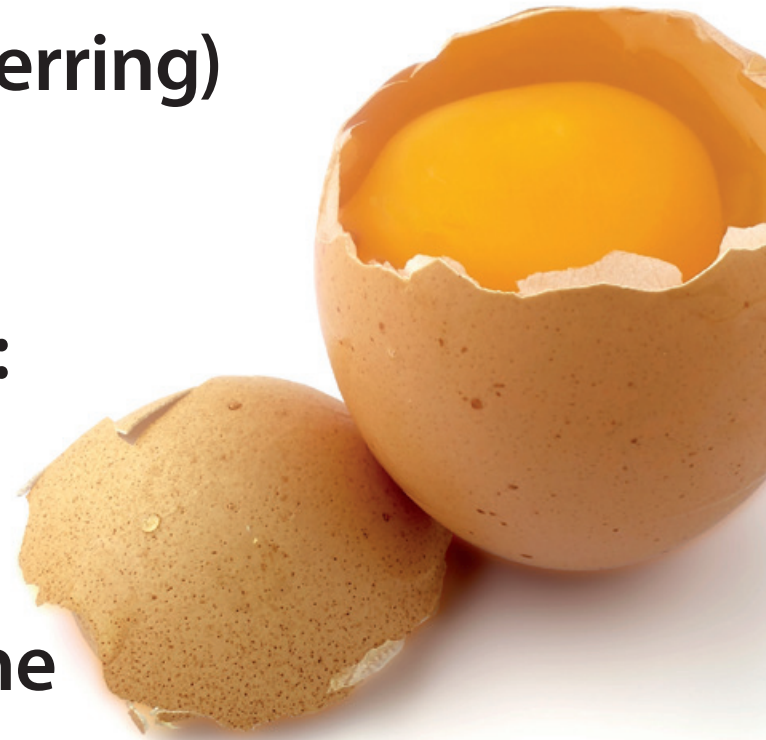
- **Allows your body to absorb calcium**
- **Calcium and vitamin D work together**
- **The body makes vitamin D with exposure to sunlight**



**Canada's Food Guide recommends seniors take a vitamin D supplement of 400 IU a day.**

# Sources of vitamin D

- Fatty fish (salmon, trout and herring)
- Egg yolks
- Foods fortified with vitamin D:
  - Milk
  - Soy beverages
  - Non-hydrogenated margarine



**Canada's Food Guide recommends seniors take a vitamin D supplement of 400 IU a day.**



# Why do we need iron?

- Carries oxygen to all parts of your body
- Gives you energy
- Deficiency can lead to anemia:
  - Feeling tired and weak
  - Can get sick more easily



# Sources of iron – not all iron is equal

## **Heme iron**

- Found in animals (beef, chicken, pork, fish)
- Absorbed easily

## **Non-heme iron**

- Found in plants (legumes, nuts, grains, vegetables and fruit)
- Not absorbed as easily



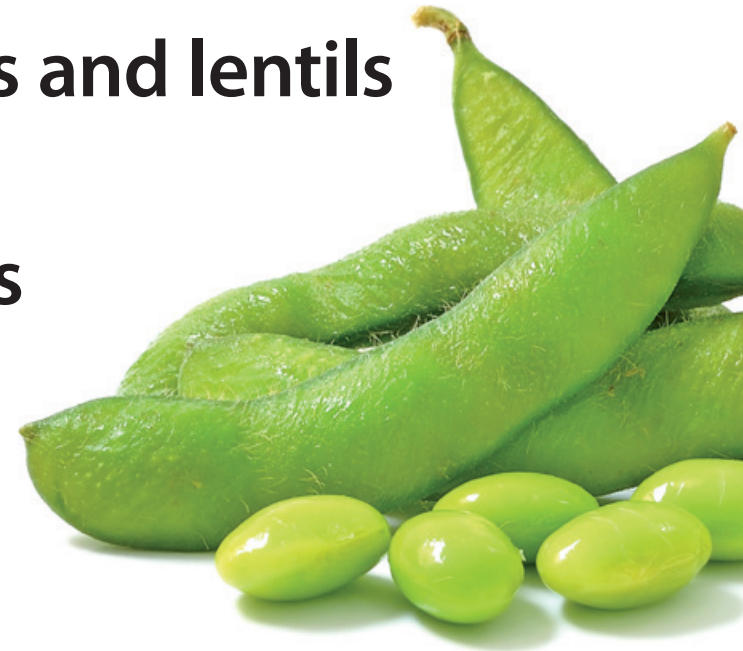
If you are feeling tired, weak and are finding it hard to get enough iron in your diet, talk to a dietitian.

# Why do we need magnesium?

- Proper muscle, nerve and enzyme function
- Helps the body use energy from food

## Good sources

- Legumes, such as beans, peas and lentils
- Nuts and seeds
- Spinach and other leaf greens
- Whole grains
- Fish
- Fruits



# What about vitamins C and E?

- Known as antioxidants – protect cells from damage

## Vitamin C

- Helps body form collagen
- Helps with wound healing and repair of bones and teeth



You can get the amount of vitamins C and E that you need by eating a healthy diet, rich in vegetables and fruit.



# Sources of vitamins C and E

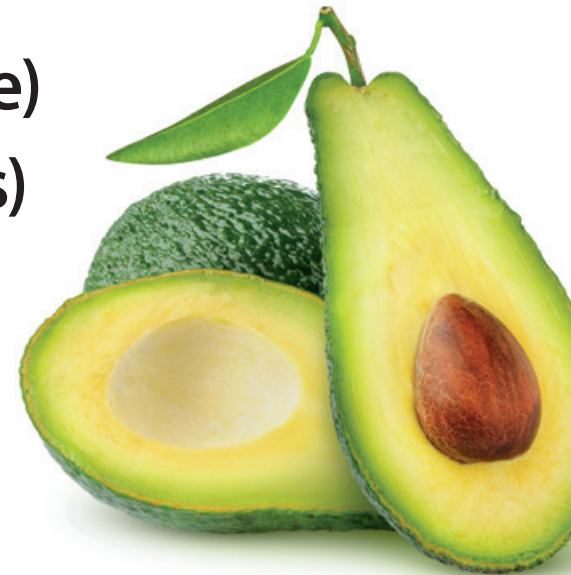
## **Vitamin C:**

**Vegetables and fruits are great sources**

## **Vitamin E:**

- **Unsaturated vegetable oils (canola, olive)**
- **Nuts and nut butters (including peanuts)**
- **Sweet potatoes, leafy greens, avocados**

**Caution - it is possible to take too much vitamin C and E**



**If you have questions or are not sure, talk with your healthcare professional or a dietitian.**



Do you need to take a  
multivitamin/mineral supplement?







A supplement is intended to  
*complement* what you eat,  
not replace a healthy diet.



# Do you need to take a multivitamin/mineral supplement?

**Supplements contain a combination of key vitamins and minerals as a pill, chewable tab or liquid.**

**If you need extra nutrients to support your diet as recommended by your healthcare provider, choose a multivitamin that is specifically intended for adults over 50 to ensure it includes an adequate amount of vitamin D (400 IU).**

**Take it as directed. Ask your pharmacist for help in selecting one that is right for you.**

**Talk to your doctor before you take any natural health products, including herbal or botanical supplements.**



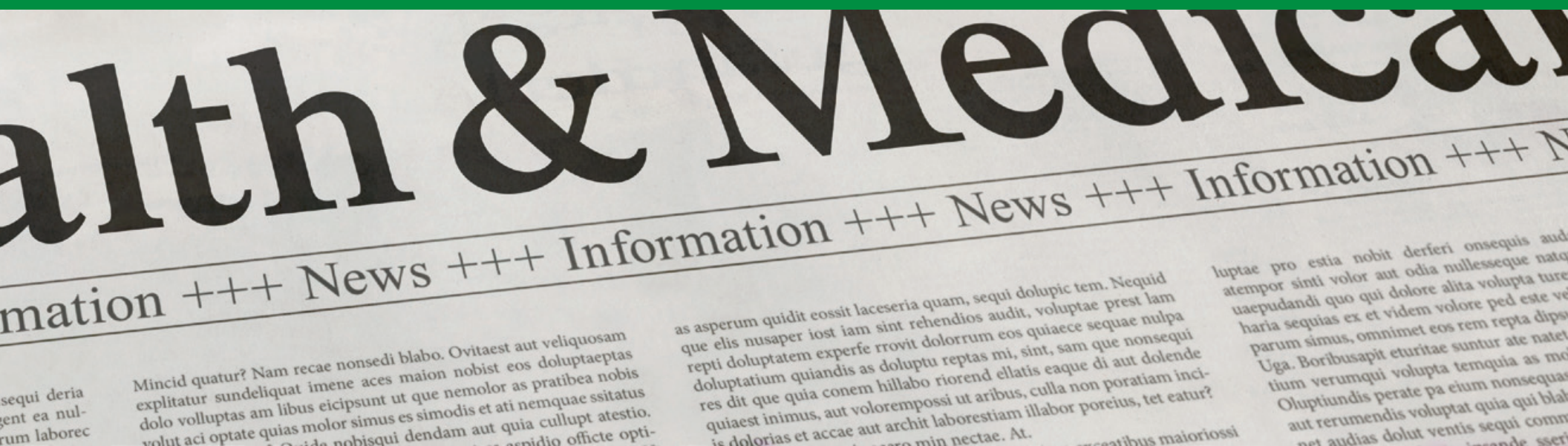
# Questions?







How do you know if you're  
getting reliable information?



# How do you know if you're getting reliable information?

- **Good information comes from a reliable source**
- **Misinformation can be dangerous**
- **Always question what you see on TV, the internet, read in an ad or hear from a friend**
- **Be critical**



# How do you know if you're getting reliable information?

## Truths:

- ✓ There is no cure for aging
- ✓ There is no proven way to prevent all types of cancer
- ✓ There is no cure for most types of arthritis
- ✓ Reaching and maintaining a healthy weight takes time
- ✓ "Natural" does not automatically mean safer

For more information, ask a dietitian





# Information you can trust

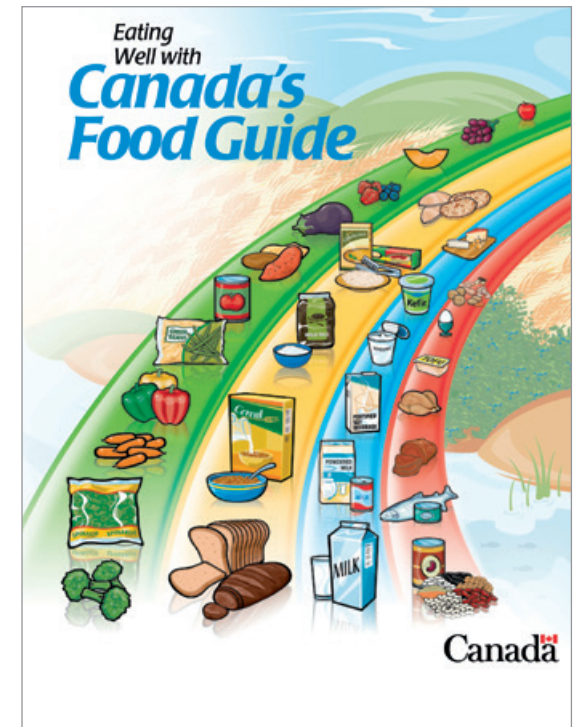
- **HealthLink BC: Call 8-1-1**
  - **Nursing Services**
  - **Dietitian Services**
  - **Physical Activity Services**
  - **Pharmacist Services**



# Information you can trust

## Healthy Eating

- Canada's Food Guide
- Dietitian Services, HealthLink BC
- BC Ministry of Health
- Health Canada
- First Nations Health Authority



# What is the difference between a dietitian and a nutritionist?

**The title of dietitian is regulated by law in Canada**

- Only those who have met national standards of education and training can use this title

**The title of nutritionist is not regulated in all provinces**

- Anybody can use the title

# Thinking critically about nutrition

What is the source?

What is the message?

What is the context?

What do you think?



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# Is this information reliable?

## Quick Diet to Lose 10 pounds

Everytime I need to lose weight fast –  
whether for a party, holiday or just for the summer –  
I start following this exact method, and

**I ALWAYS LOSE AT LEAST  
10 POUNDS IN 6-7 DAYS**

# Is this information reliable?

**HealthLinkBC**




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## Healthy Eating and Healthy Aging for Adults

**HealthLinkBC File Number:** 68j  
**Nutrition Series**

**Last Updated:** December 2016

 Download PDF:

English

Healthy eating is important at any age. It gives your body the nutrients and energy it needs for good health.

The following information will help you choose foods to help you feel your best, achieve or maintain a healthy weight, and prevent or manage chronic disease, such as heart disease and diabetes.

### What does healthy eating mean?

Healthy eating is:

- Eating in a way that meets your energy and nutrient needs, and supports your physical and mental wellbeing.
- Being able to shop for, buy and prepare a variety of healthy and affordable foods.
- Being able to enjoy the food that you eat.
- Getting pleasure from sharing meals with family and friends.

If you need help with any part of healthy eating, talk to your health care provider or a registered dietitian. To speak with a dietitian, call HealthLink BC at 8-1-1.

### What nutrients are important as we age?

As you get older, your body's ability to use or absorb some nutrients may change. In particular, it is important to get enough of the following nutrients.

**Protein**

Protein is needed to build muscles and keep them strong. It is also used to keep hair, nails and skin healthy. Protein is found in meat, fish, poultry, eggs, milk products, legumes, tofu, soy beverage, nuts, and seeds.

### Want More Information?

HealthLink BC, your provincial health line, is as close as your phone or the web any time of the day or night, every day of the year.

Call **8-1-1** toll-free in B.C. or for deaf and hearing-impaired, call **7-1-1**.

You can speak with a health services navigator, who can also connect you with a:

- registered nurse any time, every day of the year;
- registered dietitian from 9am to 5pm PT, Monday to Friday;
- qualified exercise professional from 9am to 5pm PT, Monday to Friday;
- pharmacist from 5pm to 9am PT, every day of the year.

Translation services are available in more than 130 languages.

### 8-1-1 in Translation

When you dial **8-1-1**, you can request health information services in languages other than English.

# Is this information reliable?

**SINGING LEGEND  
ANDY WILLIAMS  
DIES AGED 84**  **MISSING MEGAN: WE'RE  
NOT SEARCHING FOR  
HER, SAY FRENCH POLICE** 

**NEW PILL WILL  
REVERSE  
AGEING**


**Drug keeps you healthy and  
strong in old age, say experts**




**Why JK Rowling's novel  
for grown-ups is magic**


SCIENTISTS SAY A NEW PILL COULD REVERSE AGEING, KEEPING YOU HEALTHY AND STRONG IN OLD AGE, SAY EXPERTS. THE DRUG, WHICH IS BEING TESTED IN A CLINICAL TRIAL, IS BEING DEVELOPED BY A TEAM OF SCIENTISTS AT THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE. IT IS BEING TESTED IN A CLINICAL TRIAL WITH 100 PARTICIPANTS. THE DRUG IS BEING TESTED IN A CLINICAL TRIAL WITH 100 PARTICIPANTS. THE DRUG IS BEING TESTED IN A CLINICAL TRIAL WITH 100 PARTICIPANTS.

# Is this information reliable?

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## Food Sources of Vitamin B12

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Posted: Mar 7, 2017

### Information About Vitamin B<sub>12</sub>

- You need vitamin B<sub>12</sub> to form DNA, make healthy blood cells and keep nerves working properly.
- Vitamin B12 is found only in animal foods and fortified foods. People who avoid all animal products should look for meat alternatives, such as soy products fortified with vitamin B<sub>12</sub>.
- Ten to thirty percent of older people may not absorb vitamin B<sub>12</sub> well. Health Canada advises adults over 50 years to consume foods fortified with vitamin B<sub>12</sub> or a supplement containing vitamin B<sub>12</sub>.

### How Much Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> Should I Aim For?

Age in Years	Aim for an intake of micrograms (mcg)/day	Stay below mcg/day
Men and Women 19 and older	2.4	An upper limit for Vitamin B12 has not been established.
Pregnant Women 19 and older	2.6	
Breastfeeding Women 19 and older	2.8	

### Vitamin B<sub>12</sub> Content of Some Common Foods