

NUTRITION: 3 VITAMINS AND MINERALS FOR HEALTH AND AGING

Healthy Senior Living – taking simple nutritional steps after age 50 can help you maintain a healthy living experience.

Nutrition and healthy living should be a constant goal at any age. Exercise and a healthy diet help prevent illnesses such as heart disease and type 2 diabetes. Consuming food rich in vitamins and minerals also provides needed energy to keep us active throughout the day. But, for seniors, there are additional benefits to maintaining a balanced diet.

“After age 50, our body’s calorie requirements begin to decline, and so does our capacity to absorb vitamins and minerals,” said Melissa Tarkowski, Dietitian at Lourdes Rehabilitation and Healthcare Center.

Choosing meal options based on their nutritional value can help offset age related health issues such as high blood pressure and cholesterol. Likewise, ensuring a balanced diet improves cognitive capabilities, helps digestion and strengthens bones and organs.

“The challenge, while eating less overall, is to eat more nutrient-rich foods,” said Melissa.

While all vitamins and minerals are important, these three core vitamins and minerals should be prominent in every meal:

1. Calcium and Vitamin D: you need both vitamin D and calcium to prevent bone loss. Three servings of low fat milk or yogurt per day is the best way for your body to absorb what it needs. However fortified cereals, fortified juices and leafy greens are also great sources of calcium.
2. Fiber: eating more fiber based foods help to regulate your digestive system, as well as reduce your risk of heart disease. Whole grain cereals, whole grain bread and fresh fruit and vegetables are a great source of fiber.
3. B-12: vitamin B is an essential water-soluble vitamin that helps ensure healthy nerves and red blood cells. Milk and other dairy foods, meat, fish (especially salmon), poultry and eggs, all provide your body with the B-12 you need to stay healthy.

At Lourdes Senior Community, our dieticians make sure each meal is nutrient-packed to ensure a healthy senior living experience. Our kitchen managers and chefs also make sure each dish is as visually appetizing as it is delicious. Menus are prepared monthly and rotated quarterly to ensure a variety for fresh fruit and vegetables. Residents provide feedback to the cooks. They also make suggestions for upcoming meals at resident council meetings. The result is a pleasurable dining experience that is as mouthwatering as it is beneficial.

