

5 Hands-On Tips For Healthy Aging

Written by AZFoothills.com

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Whether you consider yourself younger or older, it's never too early or too late to support your health. Healthy aging is especially important because we are living longer—and the aging population is growing. Extending our quality of life is increasingly important.

According to a Regional Annual report, by 2030, our 65+ population is expected to grow to 975,000, or almost 1 in 5 residents of the 10-county area.

So, let's take a closer look at 5 simple things we can do to choose health.

Pick Rainbow Fruits and Vegetables

While the number of types of diets and food plans can make one dizzy, one thing is clear. Eating more fruits and vegetables is a smart step for healthy aging.

Many nutritionists recommend increasing the amount of fruits and vegetables in the diet. This is a practical and easy way to get the vitamins and nutrients from whole foods. Adopting a Rainbow approach helps you choose produce from a wide spectrum.

Think about adding orange: carrots, oranges, sweet potatoes, and squash.

Think about adding green: micro-greens, chard, kale, lettuce, and beans.

Think about adding red: apples, pears, tomatoes, and beets.

Tip: Take a look in your shopping cart. If you don't see enough colors, add some more.

Select Foods In Season

While we have the good fortune to have many vegetables and fruits available all year long, get in the habit of choosing seasonal produce. In the spring, select spring greens such as dandelion, mustards, and young asparagus. In the summer, choose berries, melons, and tomatoes. In the fall, aim for squashes, pumpkins, and carrots. In the winter, feature root vegetables such as sweet potatoes, carrots, and beets.

Tip: Shop local. By getting seasonal produce locally, you'll support farmers and small food producers. Perhaps there is a local [farmer's market](#) in your neighborhood. This is a great way to make friends and support your local community.

Get Vitamin D

Vitamin D is called the sunshine vitamin. It helps your body absorb dietary calcium and helps you have strong, healthy bones.

As we age, our needs for Vitamin D have been shown to increase. For instance, up until 70 years, the recommended dietary allowance is 600 IU/day. After 70, the RDA is 800 IU/day. The upper intake level of 4,000 is IU/day.

Tip: If you are wondering [how much Vitamin D is too much](#), you may want to investigate your food and supplement levels.

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Drink Water

How much water are you drinking? One of the best steps to support health is staying hydrated. What's the best way to start?

Experts in nutrition recommend a few key moves to boost your water intake. Here's the simplest plan of action:

- Track your water intake. You can do this by hand or with an app. If you see how much you're actually drinking, you'll have an initial benchmark.
- Start your day with a big glass of water. If you put water by the bedside, this will help you get into a healthy habit.
- Swap out sugary drinks for water. If you don't want to totally go off soda, start by swapping out one soda per day. Once you get the hang of it, you can keep going.
- Use an app to track your daily water consumption.

Tip: Start a water-drinking contest with your partner, housemate, relatives, friends or family. By focusing together, you can help your entire network stay healthy.

Eat Less Red Meat

As we age, digestion changes. It's likely you're noticing some of these changes. Perhaps some of your favorite foods no longer 'work so well.'

One of the big moves you can make for healthy eating is to reduce consumption of red meat. Red meat is not only hard on the body; it is also associated with many physical problems such as heart disease, high blood pressure, and high cholesterol.

Tip: Eating less meat helps you and the planet. The United Nations is encouraging consumers to eat less meat to curb global warming, reduce strains on land and water, and improve food security.

Sum Up

Making dietary changes for healthy aging is easier than you might imagine. With these tips you can start on a life-long journey for optimal health.