



Volunteers  
of America®

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# Healthy Living News

COLORADO BRANCH

A Publication of the Nutrition Services Division

## HAPPY HEALTHY AGING MONTH!

How exciting for the Healthy Aging Department to learn that September is Healthy Aging month! Did you know, along with our home-exercise program, Healthy Moves, we instruct 4 additional fitness, nutrition and wellness programs to communities throughout Denver, Jefferson, Adams and Arapahoe county?

- **Matter of Balance** is an 8 week, award-winning fall prevention program designed to manage falls and improve activity levels. Participants learn to view falls as controllable, set goals for increasing activity, make changes to reduce fall risks at home and exercise to increase strength and balance.
- **Steps to Healthier Aging** is a 12 week fitness and nutrition program. Participants learn how to eat healthier and move more through applicable nutrition instruction and exercise classes from a Registered Dietitian and a Certified Fitness Professional. At each nutrition lesson, food samples and healthy recipes are given to participants while the exercise classes utilize weights, resistance bands and pedometers to track steps.
- **Healthier Living: A chronic disease self-management program** is six weeks in length and instructs participants on

how to effectively manage their chronic conditions (i.e. Arthritis, Diabetes, Cancer, Heart Disease) while increasing their quality of life.

- **Arthritis Foundation Exercise Program** is a 6 week group exercise program geared toward those with arthritis, but being diagnosed with arthritis is *NOT* a requirement to participate in the class. The classes are fun, and the exercises are gentle, yet very effective. They can be done sitting or standing and instructors will give exercise modifications based on the needs of participants.



Call Natalie Rood at 303-297-0408 to find out if there is a program scheduled near you, or if your facility is interested in hosting one of these programs!

## THE DIFFERENCE YOUR DIET CAN MAKE

As you age, there are countless strategies and suggestions for staying youthful. Two of those that are guaranteed to make a difference are—you guessed it! — Diet and Exercise. For older adults, these nutrients are key in keeping you healthy, inside and out!

### Calcium and Vitamin D

Calcium and Vitamin D work together to maintain strong, healthy bones. Good sources of calcium-rich foods are low fat and fat free dairy—like milk and yogurt, fortified cereals and dark green leafy vegetables. Aim for 3 servings of Calcium & Vitamin D every day. If you take supplements, be sure that you have one with both Calcium and Vitamin D, as one can't work without the other!



### Fiber

Fiber helps to keep your bowel function normal and helps you to feel full at meal times. Good sources of fiber are whole grains, fruits, and vegetables. Aim for 25 to 35 grams of fiber per day.

### Potassium

Increasing your intake of potassium and reducing your intake of sodium (salt) can lower your risk for high blood pressure. Good sources of potassium include: milk, yogurt and some fruits & vegetables. Tomatoes, oranges, and potatoes are some of the top dietary sources for potassium.

### Healthy Fats

Most of the fats you consume should come from heart healthy, unsaturated fats. These are generally plant based fats vs. animal based fats. Try extra virgin olive oil, canola oil, walnuts, almonds or avocados.

## MEDITATION: KEY TO YOUR MIND

Many health habits start off with preparation and planning; whether it is brushing your teeth in the morning or remembering to take your vitamins everyday. One healthy habit that can reduce your stress level and lower blood pressure is meditation.

Meditation is the act of focusing your energy and mind to a single point of reference. Mostly it involves focused breathing, awareness of body positioning, and calming distracting thoughts. As you know—the mind is a tricky thing. It can cause you to be worrisome, apprehensive, or even scared to try new things. Meditation allows you to understand your thoughts, body, and breath by taking a short time out of your day to be mindful.



Here are some tips to prepare, plan, and begin a meditation routine:

**Find a quiet, comfortable space.** You do not have to sit cross legged on the floor. You can sit on your sofa or chair to begin.

**Start slow!** Begin with no more than 3-5 minutes. It is harder than you think to sit and be silent for that long.

**Focus on your breath.** Take long controlled breaths in through your nose and exhale out through your mouth.

**Relax.** Be aware of your body and how it feels at that time of day. Relax your muscles as much as possible.

**Mindfulness is key.** Keep the negative thoughts away from this time. Think positively about your goals and dreams, but remember to be kind in your thoughts.

# IMPROVE YOUR DIET ONE STEP AT A TIME

We know diet and exercise are important. But, how can we change years of eating habits? A person can make positive changes at any age. Reflect on your food choices and make one small change at a time. Here are some ideas to get you started!

## **Try a new fruit or vegetable this week.**

Add fruit to oatmeal, yogurt or bran cereal in the morning. Add a vegetable to foods you already eat such as omelets, your favorite microwave meal or spaghetti sauce. Fresh, frozen or canned vegetables all provide important nutrients to keep us healthy.



## **Keep the salt shaker out of reach.**



Many of us want to reduce the salt in our diets. Start by taking the salt shaker off the table.

## **Be mindful of your eating for a day.**



Pay attention to what you eat. Sit at the table and turn off distractions like TV. Slow down and enjoy the flavor of each bite. Ask yourself, "Do I eat because I am bored?" "Do I mindlessly eat junk food while watching TV?" "How many cookies did I eat?"

## **Be solution focused.**

Use your life experiences and skills to find solutions to barriers to healthy eating.

Here is an example:

Problem: "I don't like to cook for one."

Possible solutions: "I can cook one day this week and save leftovers in the freezer for later." Or, "I will cook with a friend. We will eat at my place this week and his place next week."

## **Add a high fiber food to your diet.**

Whole wheat pasta  
Whole wheat tortillas  
Oatmeal  
Dried beans  
100% Bran cereal  
Raw fruit instead of juice  
Vegetables

## **Drink more water.**

Fill a water bottle in the morning and again mid-day. Keep it with you throughout the day.



## **Eat a new healthy snack today.**

- Boiled egg and raw fruit
- Peanut butter and celery
- Red pepper slices with dip
- Whole grain crackers and hummus

**Call today for a FREE nutrition consultation! Contact Sarah at 303-297-0408.**



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**COLORADO BRANCH**

**Helping America's most vulnerable™**

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The Volunteers of America is a national non-profit, spiritually-based human service organization. Since 1896 Volunteers of America Colorado Branch has been seeking to identify and serve the basic needs of the most vulnerable individuals and families in our community. If you would like information on how you can get involved, please call us at: 303-297-0408

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Visit us on the web:  
[www.voacolorado.org](http://www.voacolorado.org)

Happy Healthy Aging Month

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BALANCE
AGE
STEPS
ARTHRITIS
CALCIUM
TOMATOES
WALNUTS
MINDFULNESS
BREATH
SOLUTION