

Geriatric Nutrition-An Imperative Vitamin and Minerals Compulsion

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Abstract

Getting a competent nourishment can be a challenge as one gets older. With growing age, the amount of calories needed begins to decline, therefore every calorie that is consumed must be packed with nutrition in order to hit the mark. On the other hand Even then, it may fall short. "As one gets older, the body turns into less efficient at absorbing nutrients. Malnutrition and dehydration are widespread in older people, and obesity is an increasing problem. Therefore proper intake of nutrient rich in vitamins and minerals should be appreciated.

Keyword: Geriatric Nutrition, Vitamins, Minerals, Recommendations

Introduction

Nutrition is an important modulator of health and wellbeing in older persons. Nutrition and health in older people Health status is closely related to the ageing process, and nutrition is one factor that has beneficial or negative effects on the rate of the ageing process (British Nutrition Foundation 2009). Inadequate nutrition contributes to the progression of many diseases and is also regarded as one important contributing factors. Food has an important influence on physical health and independence, and also contributes to social, cultural and psychological quality of life (American Dietetic Association 2005b). In older people, malnutrition is more frequently correlated with being underweight and having incompetent intakes, rather than with being overweight (Nowson 2007). Low energy intake usually means in meager intakes of macronutrients and micronutrients. Under nutrition is related to poor health outcomes, including: increased risk of mortality, protracted and more frequent hospitalization, falls, and increased risk of osteoporosis (Australia and New Zealand Society for Geriatric Medicine 2007). Overweight or obese older people may become malnourished due to consuming energy-dense but nutrient poor foods, resulting in an inadequate micronutrient intake. Due to many factors, nutritional intake is often compromised in older persons and the risk of malnutrition is increased. Beside malnutrition older peoples are at high risk of dehydration for various reasons with serious health consequences, on the other hand obesity is also a

well-known negative health consequences in older people. Nutritional support services for grocery shopping and meal preparation are believed to assist older people living in the community to achieve adequate nutrition (Keller 2006). Thus supporting with adequate nutrition including adequate amount of vitamins and minerals to prevent and treat malnutrition, dehydration as well as obesity is as important public health concern. Several key nutrients in particular may be in short supply as you get older. Here are the top vitamins and nutrients to look out for -- and how to get enough.

Vitamin B12

B12 is important for creating red blood cells and DNA, and for maintaining healthy nerve function. Getting enough B12 is a challenge for older people because they can't absorb it properly from food. Even a mild vitamin B12 deficiency may put older adults at risk for dementia.

How to hit the mark: one should eat more foods rich in B12. The richest sources include fish, meat, poultry, eggs, milk, and milk products.

Recommendation-2.4 mcg per Day.

Folate/Folic Acid

You may have heard of folate. Too little of this essential B vitamin is known for contributing to anemia and increasing the risk of a pregnant woman having a baby with a neural tube defect. Older people whose diets don't include a lot of fruits and vegetables or fortified breakfast cereals may be falling short of folic acid which can lead to impairment of cell division and an accumulation of possibly toxic metabolites e.g. Homocystine.

How to hit the mark: cereals are fortified with folate, should be promoted to take in breakfast or plenty of fruits and vegetables, it's wise to take a supplement that contains folate,

Recommendation-400mcg per Day

Calcium

Calcium plays many roles in the body. But it is most important for building and maintaining strong bones. The deficiency of Calcium in body will lead to increase the risk of brittle bones and fractures. Calcium works with vitamin D to keep bones strong at all ages. Bone loss can lead to fractures in both older women and men.

How to hit the mark: Having a three servings a day of low-fat milk and other dairy products. Other good dietary sources of calcium include kale and broccoli, as well as juices fortified with calcium, milk and milk products (fat-free or low-fat is best), canned fish with soft bones, dark-green leafy vegetables, and foods with calcium added, like breakfast cereals.

Recommendation-Men 1000mg per day, Women 1200mg per day

Vitamin D

Vitamin D helps the body absorb calcium, maintain bone density, and prevent osteoporosis and also protect against some chronic diseases, including cancer, type 1 diabetes, rheumatoid arthritis, multiple sclerosis, and autoimmune diseases. In older people, vitamin D deficiency has also been linked to increased risk of frequently falling.

How to hit the mark: foods that are vitamin D fortified, including cereals, milk, some yogurts, and juices. Vitamin D is found in salmon, tuna, and eggs. Older people need to take vitamin D supplements, since the skin becomes less efficient at producing the vitamin from sunlight as the aging occurs

Recommendation- 15mcg per Day

Potassium

Consumption of potassium in a diet keeps bones strong. This essential mineral is vital for cell function and has also been shown the effect on reducing high blood pressure and the risk of kidney stones.

How to hit the mark: Fruits and vegetables are the richest dietary sources of potassium. Banana, prunes, plums, and potatoes with their skin are particularly rich in potassium. By consuming fruits and vegetables at every meal, one can get enough potassium

Recommendation- 4,700 mg per Day.

Magnesium

Adequate Consumption of magnesium helps in keeping immune system in top shape, healthy-heart, and strong bones. Absorption of magnesium decreases with age. Medications taken by older people, including diuretics, may reduce the absorption of magnesium.

How to hit the mark: Plate filled up with many unprocessed foods, including fresh fruits, vegetables, nuts, whole grains, beans and seeds, all of which are great sources of magnesium.

Recommendation: women-320 mg per Day, men-420 mg per Day

Fiber

Fiber helps promote healthy digestion by moving foods through the digestive tract. Foods rich in fiber, including whole grains, beans, fruits, and vegetables, have many other health benefits, including protecting against heart disease.

How to hit the mark: Eat more whole grains, nuts, beans, fruits, and vegetables.

Conclusion

Nutritional status among elderly should be more focused on diet and possible nutritional interventions are required .as elderly requires more attention for better physiological progression, vitamins and minerals being protective in nature should be introduced in diet to cope up with malnutrition, dehydration and obesity. Preventive measures that ensure a variety of food is easily available and encourage healthy food choices should be implemented before nutritional complications arise. Maintaining healthy eating patterns and sufficient energy intake within the context of healthy social, socioeconomic and physical environments will help to ensure optimal health status. Frequent meals and snacks are key to ensuring dietary variety, optimal energy and micronutrient intake. While many older adults remain healthy and eat well, those in poorer health may experience difficulties in meeting their nutritional needs. Meeting the diet and nutrition needs of older people is crucial for the maintenance of health, functional independence and quality of life.

Recommendation

Nutrition deserves an appropriate consideration as people reach older age, consideration of good nutrition is crucial for good health. Healthful ageing is correlated with a number of physiological, cognitive, social and lifestyle changes that influence dietary intakes and nutritional status. An approach to and consumption of healthy food for older people is inveigled by the far-reaching determinants of health. These determinants include cultural, social, historical and economic factors. A life course approach to ageing recognizes that the effects of these determinants accumulate throughout the life series and have an impact on health thus due to this aggregative impact, interventions modifying the determinants of health are influential at all stages of life.

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