



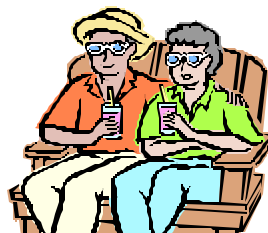
Mature Munching



As we mature we notice changes in our bodies – lots of changes! We lose some of our stamina. The amount of food our body needs is less – about 2 percent less for every 10 years! Body fat replaces body muscle. Your cholesterol level may rise and your bone mass may be less. Your thirst mechanism may diminish so you may need to make a conscious effort to get enough fluids. Your body may be less efficient at using the oxygen you are breathing.

These changes are NOT a good thing. Can we slow down or maybe even reverse the effects of maturing? The answer is maybe. If we make smart choices in the foods we consume and include physical activity in our daily routine, we may be able to slow the onset of some of the changes and diseases that are attributed to aging.

No matter what your age, we all need the same nutrients. We all need protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins, minerals, and water. We just need these nutrients in different amounts. One added factor as we mature may be the effects medications have on how our bodies use nutrients. Sometimes medications change our feelings of hunger – we may either gain or lose weight unintentionally.



With all of the changes that happen in the maturing body, we need to pay particular attention to some of the nutrients including protein, calcium, vitamin D, iron, B vitamins, zinc, and water. And since with aging comes problems with constipation and digestion, fiber becomes even more important to us.

Since we may need to eat less food than we have in the past, we need to make smart choices in whatever we are eating. Fresh fruits and vegetables are good sources of lots of the vitamins and minerals our bodies need. Whole grain breads, cereal, and pasta will increase our fiber intake along with some of the B vitamins.

Reading food labels for fiber, sodium, and carbohydrates may be more important than ever before if high blood pressure, constipation, or diabetes have come into your life. And because it is difficult to cook for one or two, making healthy choices may be more difficult when frozen entrees, deli foods, and take-out seem more appealing than cooking.

Since there is no “miracle” food, the same principles apply – eat a variety of foods in the right quantity. Limit your intake of fat, sugar, and salt. Drink plenty of fluids. (Use the color of your urine as a guide to whether you are getting enough fluids or not. Urine should be a clear, very pale yellow.)

And then there's the physical activity. We all need to keep physically active so that we can walk and enjoy our lives as we age. How much physical activity? That depends on the individual. If you are at your desired weight and have been there for a number of years, 30 minutes per day is recommended. If you have lost weight recently and are trying to maintain that weight loss, 60 minutes per day are needed. If you are overweight and are trying to reduce, 90 minutes may be needed.

BUT BEFORE YOU BEGIN ANY PHYSICAL ACTIVITY PROGRAM, CONTACT YOUR PHYSICIAN. You need to make sure you are in good enough physical shape to participate in these activities.



Small Batch Lasagna
Makes 4 servings



- 2 ounces lean ground beef
- 1/4 cup chopped onion
- 1 cup petite diced tomatoes
- 1/4 teaspoon oregano
- 1/4 teaspoon garlic powder
- 1/4 teaspoon basil
- 4 ounces whole wheat lasagna noodles
- 1/2 cup 2% fat cottage cheese
- 1 tablespoon dry parsley
- 1 egg
- 1/2 cup part-skim mozzarella cheese, shredded
- 1/4 cup Parmesan cheese

Brown meat in a saucepan. Add onion and continue to cook until onion is tender. Drain fat. Add tomatoes, oregano, garlic powder, and basil; stir and simmer for 15 minutes. Mix together egg and cottage cheese.

Lightly spray an 8 x 8-inch pan with nonstick cooking spray. Break noodles in half. Place a layer of noodles in the pan and top with 1/2 of the cottage cheese mixture then half of the meat mixture and half of the mozzarella cheese. Repeat layers. Pour 1/4 cup of water over top, sprinkle with Parmesan cheese and cover tightly with foil.

Bake at 350 degrees F. for 25 minutes remove foil and cook for 10 minutes more or until noodles are tender. Let stand a few minutes before cutting. To freeze, wrap well in foil and place in resealable freezer bag.

Nutritional Information Per Serving: 214 calories, 17 grams protein, 21 grams carbohydrate, 7 grams fat, 4 grams fiber, 74 milligrams cholesterol, 438 milligrams sodium

Prepared by: Shirley Camp, MS, RD
Extension Educator
Nutrition and Wellness
Macomb Center



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