

Wellness News

March 2024

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“First forget inspiration. Habit is more dependable. Habit will sustain you whether you're inspired or not.”

Octavia E. Butler



Anthem members: You can view and manage your benefits, access wellness tools and resources to improve your overall wellbeing. Simply scan this QR code with your smartphone's camera to download the Sydney Health app.

Tip: Anthem.com and Sydney Health use the same username and password!

March: National Nutrition Month®



National Nutrition Month® is an [annual campaign](#) established in 1973 by the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics. During the month of March, everyone is invited to learn about making informed food choices and developing healthful eating and physical activity habits.

This year's theme is "**Food Connects Us.**" Food is a connecting factor for many of us. Food connects us to our cultures, our families and our friends. Sharing a meal is an opportunity to learn about its preparation, who made it and where the ingredients were sourced. Health, memories, traditions, seasons and access can all impact our relationship with food. While these factors influence the foods we eat, the foods we eat also affect our health.

Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDs) and Nutrition and Dietetics Technicians, Registered (NDTRs) play a critical role in helping people understand the connection between the foods individuals and communities eat, and how these foods impact health throughout life.



Check out this podcast by two dynamic RDs.
[How to Make Healthy Eating Work for You](#)
[Diabetes Digital Podcast by Food Heaven](#)

Weekly Nutrition Messages

Week 1: **Connect with Food**

- Learn cooking, food preparation and meal planning skills.
- Explore where your food comes from.
- Learn about community resources such as SNAP, WIC and local food banks.

Week 2: **Connect with a Nutrition Expert**

- Ask your doctor for a referral to an RDN.
- Find an RDN who specializes in your unique needs.
- Receive personalized nutrition information to meet your health goals.

Week 3: **Explore the Connection Between Food & Culture**

- Experiment with recipes using different ingredients or cooking techniques.
- Include your favorite cultural foods and traditions or try new global flavors.
- Enjoy your meals with family or friends, when possible.

Week 4: **Build the Connection Across All Stages of Life**

- Learn how nutrient needs may change with age.
- Include healthful foods from all food groups.
- Focus on balanced and sustainable eating habits.

For more ideas and ways to get involved with National Nutrition month visit eatright.org

Anthem members: Sydney Health has personalized action plans which include getting active, eating healthier, losing weight, reducing stress and sleeping better. Take time to work towards your health goals and make healthy choices that fit your lifestyle today.

Healthy Nutrition At Any Age

Simple adjustments can go a long way toward building a healthier eating pattern. Follow these tips to get the most out of foods and beverages while meeting your nutrient needs and reducing the risk of disease:

- Enjoy a variety of foods from each [food group](#) to help reduce the risk of developing diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and heart disease. Choose foods with little to no [added sugar, saturated fats, and sodium](#).
- To get enough protein throughout the day and maintain muscle, try adding seafood, dairy, or fortified soy products along with beans, peas, and lentils to your meals. Learn more about [protein and other important nutrients](#).
- Add sliced or chopped fruits and vegetables to meals and snacks. Look for pre-cut varieties if slicing and chopping are a challenge for you.
- Try foods fortified with vitamin B12, such as some cereals, or talk to your doctor about taking a B12 supplement. Learn more about [key vitamins and minerals](#).
- Reduce sodium intake by seasoning foods with herbs and citrus such as lemon juice.
- Drink plenty of water throughout the day to help [stay hydrated](#) and aid in the digestion of food and absorption of nutrients. Avoid sugary drinks.

[Healthy Meal Planning: Tips for Older Adults:](#)

Answering the question “what should I eat?” doesn’t need to leave you feeling baffled and frustrated. In fact, when you have the right information and motivation, you can feel good about making healthy choices. Use these tips to plan healthy and delicious meals:

- **Plan in advance.** Meal planning takes the guesswork out of eating and can help ensure you eat a variety of nutritious foods throughout the day.
- **Find budget-friendly foods.** Create a shopping list in advance to help [stick to a budget](#) and follow these [SNAP-friendly recipes](#).
- **Consider preparation time.** Some meals can be made in as little as five minutes. If you love cooking, or if you’re preparing a meal with or for friends or family, you may want to try something a little more challenging.
- **Keep calories in mind.** The number of calories people need each day varies by individual. Always discuss your weight and fitness goals with your health care provider before making big changes. Read about [calorie goals and healthy food swaps](#).

5 Tips for Choosing Healthier Foods as You Age

Follow these tips to help you maintain a healthy weight, get needed nutrients, and lower your risk of developing certain diseases.



Eat a variety of foods each day.

Read food labels to learn what's in your food.



Choose foods that don't have a lot of sugar, saturated fats, and sodium.

Be aware of how many calories you need per day.

	Women 60+		Men 60+	
Physical activity	Calories		Physical activity	Calories
Not active	1,600		Not active	2,000-2,200
Moderately active	1,800		Moderately active	2,200-2,400
Very active	2,000-2,200		Very active	2,400-2,600

Keep a food diary to track what you eat.

Learn more about healthy eating as you age at www.nia.nih.gov/healthy-eating.

 National Institute on Aging

Eating Healthy On a Budget

Eating healthy can help boost your immune system, decrease your risk for certain chronic illnesses, and even improve digestion, but at what cost? It turns out that by making small, simple changes to how you prep, shop, and cook, you can enjoy the benefits of healthy eating without breaking the bank.



How to prep:

- **Plan meals.** Knowing exactly what you need for the week will help you make a list and avoid overspending at the store.
- **Check available coupons.** If your grocery store has a mobile app, they may have digital coupons you can use.



How to shop:

- **Buy in bulk.** Meat and dry goods like rice or oats are cheaper in large amounts. Plus, you can freeze or store any extras.
- **Choose frozen fruits and vegetables.** They're cheaper and last longer than fresh and hold similar nutritional value.
- **Consider generic brands.** They're usually the same quality as name-brand items but less expensive.



What to try:

- **Eat different proteins.** Beans, lentils, and eggs are all low-cost sources of protein. If you still want meat, try lean meat like turkey, instead of beef.
- **Cook at home and make extra.** Leftovers from a home-cooked meal are a great alternative to take-out on a busy night.
- **Grow a garden.** It may take some extra effort, but seeds are inexpensive, and you'll always know your produce is fresh.

Choose a tip to try this week and start saving.

Garlicky Portobello Pizzas

Active: 10 mins **Cook Time:** 18 mins **Servings:** 4

Ingredients:

- 2 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil
- 2 teaspoons [McCormick® Salt Free Very Good Garlic by Tabitha Brown All Purpose Seasoning](#)
- 4 medium Portobello caps, gills and stems removed
- 1/4 cup tomato sauce
- 1 cup vegan shredded mozzarella cheese
- 1/4 cup chopped baby spinach
- 1/4 cup black olives
- 1/4 cup chopped red onion
- 1/4 cup sliced red bell pepper
- [McCormick® Oregano Leaves](#)

Directions:

Step 1: Heat broiler on HIGH, with oven rack about 6 inches below heating element. Line a rimmed baking sheet with foil and spray with no stick cooking spray; set aside. Mix olive oil and Very Good Garlic Seasoning in small bowl. Brush mixture on both sides of Portobello mushroom caps, placing caps on prepared pan.

Step 2: Broil mushroom caps 2 to 3 minutes per side, or just until tender.

Step 3: Preheat oven to 450°F. Flip mushroom caps so undersides are facing up on baking sheet. Spoon about 1 tablespoon sauce onto each mushroom cap. Sprinkle each cap with about 1/4 cup of the cheese and 1 tablespoon each spinach, olives, red onion and bell pepper. Sprinkle with oregano and additional Very Good Garlic Seasoning, if desired.

Step 4: Bake 10 to 12 minutes or until cheese is melted and lightly browned. Serve hot.

