

This information is forwarded by the **Love Thy Neighbor Ministry** at Saint Rose of Lima Catholic Church, Milton FL.
Source of Information: The Catholic Foundation of Northwest Florida. Due to the many references, some may not be current but have many useful reference sources. Emails are sent using the Blind Carbon Copy (BCC) method.

This quality of life series focuses primarily on senior citizens plus other supplemental information. You do not have to be a Senior to make use of this information. If you know of a Senior, a parishioner or a neighbor who could use this information you are invited to give them a copy of this email. Fellowship through improved communications is guided by the second greatest commandment. Sometimes an act of kindness can be as simple as a phone call, a visit, or receipt of an email.

Suggestion: Create a separate folder of this information for ease of future reference.

For information about our Parish, click on the following link: <http://parishesonline.com/scripts/HostedSites/Org.asp?ID=14423>

Our parish spirit is rising, is rising.

A New Food Pyramid for Seniors

http://www.legacygifts.org/savvy_senior.jsp?WebID=GL2004-0129&D=200811

Dear Savvy Senior,

I've read that the government has created a new food pyramid of dietary guidelines for seniors. What can you tell me about this?

Health Conscious Carol

Dear Health,

It's not Uncle Sam who created the "senior specific" food pyramid, but researchers from Tufts University in Boston, MA. Here's what they came up with and why.

New Food Pyramid

Researchers at Tufts University recently tweaked the U.S. Department of Agriculture food guide pyramid to more accurately meet the nutritional needs of seniors, age 70 and older.

The pyramid was modified to reflect seniors' unique dietary needs that are not being addressed in the current one-size-fits-all USDA pyramid. For most seniors, their appetites decline as they age and they consume fewer calories, but their bodies still require the same or higher levels of nutrients than their younger counterparts. This means that seniors have to make every calorie count in order to get the essential nutrients they need to stay healthy.

That's where the senior specific food pyramid comes in. It emphasizes the importance of nutrient-dense foods - including dark-colored fruits and vegetables, low-fat dairy, and fortified whole grains - that provide lots of vitamins and minerals per mouthful. The new pyramid also emphasizes four areas that are key in boosting a senior's health.

Supplements: The need for calcium, vitamin D and vitamin B12 increases as we age, and most seniors simply don't get adequate amounts from food alone, especially if their calorie intake decreases. Daily recommended amounts include 1,200 mg calcium, 400 international units (IU) of vitamin D after age 50 (600 IU after age 70), and 2.4 micrograms of vitamin B12. Talk to your doctor about which supplements you may need.

Fiber: Bulking up your fiber intake is also very important. A fiber-rich diet can help seniors lower their cholesterol, reduce their risk of heart disease, diabetes, high blood pressure and gastrointestinal problems like constipation, hemorrhoids, diverticulitis and irritable bowel syndrome. To get the recommended daily fiber (21

grams for women, 30 grams for men - over age 50), choose whole grains, like high-fiber cereals, instead of refined ones; whole fruits and vegetables instead of juices; and lots of beans and legumes.

Fluids: Long-term dehydration is one of the most common, and often overlooked, problems with aging - causing constipation as well as deterioration of the kidneys, muscles and cognitive ability. A decreased thirst sensation is common with aging, making it less likely that seniors will eat or drink enough to get sufficient fluids. To guard against this, Tufts recommends drinking eight glasses of fluids a day. If you're underweight, make some of these milk and juice, which provide both calories and nutrients.

Exercise: Statistics indicate that obesity in seniors age 70 and older has been on the upswing in recent years, and regular physical activity (about 30 minutes, five days a week) is key to avoiding excess weight. It's important to note that the new food pyramid for older adults is not designed to consider the special dietary needs of those with significant health problems.

Savvy Tips: For more information or to print a copy of the 70-plus food pyramid visit nutrition.tufts.edu. And to create your own personal food pyramid, go to the USDA's online tool at www.mypyramid.gov, where you can plug in your age, gender, height, weight and daily activity level to create your own dietary plan.