

Welcome to the era of feeling young and looking younger!

baby boomers and zoomers

Baby Boomers are a generation of active living people; feeling great and living life with vitality, energy and health in mind are the gold standards in healthy aging.

Today, life expectancy for women is into their late eighties and for men, into their mid-eighties. Your goal is to live longer with vitality and avoid as many health problems as possible. That is the key to living life to its fullest, and it's easier than you think!

A good place to start is to find out about your family's medical history. This includes your parents, grandparents, siblings, etc. Diseases like diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, stroke and cancer, to name a few, can be passed down through generations. This doesn't mean getting them is a sure thing, but it may increase the possibility. The good news is that there are steps you can take to stay healthier, including getting regular checkups, eating right and making exercise a part of your life.

Eating well goes a long way in helping you feel good and preventing some health problems. You get your nutrients, vitamins and minerals from the foods you eat but as you age, your body may have difficulty absorbing them. To make sure you are on the right track, your doctor can test your blood for key nutrient levels, such as Vitamin D, B12 and

iron, at your next annual physical. You need to know what and how much you need before rushing to the store to buy vitamins and/or supplements. Remember, more isn't always better. Some vitamins are fat soluble, meaning they can accumulate in the body, so talk to your doctor and/or registered dietitian to make sure you are getting what you need.



Daily Recommended Intakes for Ages 50+ (National Institute of Health)

To make sure your diet is evenly distributed with the maximum health benefits, it should be divided as follows:

- Complex carbohydrates (fruit, vegetables and whole grains): 45-65% of total daily intake
- Protein: 10-35% of total daily intake
- Fat: 20-35% of total daily intake
- Folate: 400 mcg/day
- Vitamin B12: 2.4 mcg/day
- Vitamin C: Women: 75 mg/day – Men: 90 mg/day
- Vitamin D: 400 to 600 IU/day and not more than 2000 IU/day
- Calcium: 1200 mg/day
- Magnesium: Women: 320 mg/day – Men: 420 mg/day
- Iron: 8 mg/day



ROAST GARLIC AND BLACK BEAN SOUP WITH CHICKEN

Serves 10

- 3 lb (1.5 kg) whole chicken, cooked
- 6 cloves garlic
- 8 cups (2 L) chicken broth
- 1 Tbsp (15 mL) fresh thyme
- 1 Tbsp (15 mL) lemon rind
- 2 celery stalks, diced
- ½ tsp (2.5 mL) fresh black pepper
- 1 cup (250 mL) fresh parsley
- 1 can (19 oz / 540 mL) black beans

PREPARATION:

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
2. Wrap cloves of garlic in foil and bake in preheated oven for 20 minutes or until soft when pierced with a sharp knife. Cool and remove pulp from cloves by squeezing, leaving skin behind. Mash.
3. Remove the skin from the cooked chicken. Cut the meat into bite-size pieces. You should get 2 ½ - 3 cups of diced chicken from this.
4. Pour the stock into the large saucepan and add the garlic, thyme, lemon rind and celery. Drain and rinse the canned beans under running cold water. Add to pot. Bring to a boil, and then simmer gently for 5 minutes. Add chicken pieces and heat another few minutes.
5. Taste for flavour and season with fresh black pepper. Scatter fresh chopped parsley over top and serve.

Note: You can wrap and freeze the chicken carcass to make homemade chicken stock at a later date.



By being active, eating well and having regular checkups, you're well on your way to living life with health and vitality!

Think fibre: On average, Canadians are only getting about half the daily recommended amount of fibre in their diets. Fibre can help lower cholesterol levels and keep blood sugars in better control. Include fibre-rich foods every day at every meal.

Fibre Recommendations from the Institute of Medicine:

- Boomer men = 30 grams of fibre/day
- Boomer women = 21 grams of fibre/day

BREAKFAST FIBRE IDEAS:

- Look for cereal with bran/psyllium
- Add fresh or dried fruit, like berries
- Use fibre-rich bread (made with whole grains) for toasting

LUNCH FIBRE IDEAS:

- Choose bean or vegetable soup
- Try lentil, bean or grain salads
- Include salad, raw veggies or fresh fruit

SUPPER FIBRE IDEAS:

- Add bran or ground flax to sauces and stews
- Switch to whole wheat pasta and brown rice
- Be creative; try barley, quinoa, bulgur, buckwheat or wild rice

What about exercise?

Exercise can reduce the risk of certain types of cancer, heart disease, stroke, broken bones, diabetes and hypertension; it can also help with arthritis, reduce your chances of falling and improve symptoms of depression.

According to neuroscientists from the University of Cambridge and the National Institute on Aging, aerobic exercise may also create new brain cells. It also increases the size of the hippocampus, a part of the brain that plays an important role in long-term memory and spatial navigation; it is also one of the first areas that is damaged by Alzheimer's Disease.

Exercise not only reduces fat in your body but visceral fat as well. Visceral fat accumulates deep inside your belly, around your organs, as you get older. This fat can contribute to disease, like cardiovascular disease and diabetes.

It's never too late to start. You can build muscle and bone strength at any age.

According to Canada's Physical Activity Guide, you should work up to 30-60 minutes of moderate exercise every day, including:

- **Endurance exercises**
4-7 times/week – Cardio on the go!

- **Flexibility exercises**
every day – Yoga, anyone?
- **Strength/balance exercises**
2-4 times/week – Build those muscles!

This could be a good time to try a new sport. There are many sport groups geared toward the active Baby Boomer. Try joining a hiking group, which may include snowshoeing in the winter; try your hand at tennis lessons, cycling, belly dancing or even hoola hooping! You just may find a sport that you never thought you would like. Be creative and have some fun! It doesn't have to be structured either; try walking after dinner.

Visit these sites for more information:

- www.chicken.ca
- www.50plus.com
- www.nih.gov
- www.heartandstroke.com
- www.phac-aspc.gc.ca

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