

Eat for Your Age

不同年齡 的營養需求

What different nutrients do our bodies need at different ages? We talk to Dr Ben Fong of Healthway Medical Centres to find out...

想知道身體在不同的成長階段會有甚麼不同的營養需要？我們訪問了健維醫療中心的家庭醫生方玉輝醫生，為您找出答案。

A person's health greatly depends on a number of personal factors, such as your genes, the environment and eating habits. Dr Ben Fong, General Practitioner at the Healthway Medical Centres, says, "Your nutritional needs vary as you age. The most important thing is to take in the nutrients you need as you grow from childhood through adolescence to become an adult. During that period, your body needs a substantial amount of protein and calcium to strengthen itself, promoting the development of your cells and cementing your bone structure and its growth. Then once you've become an adult, the nutrition in your body fades with age, so it's important to replenish your body to ensure it remains healthy."

Food for Kids

Your body's need for nutrients does not remain the same throughout your life; a child's growth and metabolism differs from that of an adult, so when you're considering nutritional needs, you must also consider gender and age. To ensure healthy development of the brain, muscles, bones and growth during childhood, it is important that a child receives adequate amounts of vitamins A, B and C along with a balanced diet. Dr Fong suggests parents should introduce solid foods to an infant at six months old to avoid formula becoming the staple diet of the baby. Although formula is full of nutrients, it is still not natural food, and an excess of nutrients can also harm the body.



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「從孩童、青春期至成人的成長階段，最重要是吸收營養。」

Teenage Respite

During puberty, a nutritious diet will help support teenagers' immunity and their transition from child to adult. Dr Fong recommends two servings of fruit and vegetables a day, which will give the body the fiber, vitamins and minerals that it needs, and it will also help with any skin issues that tend to occur at this age when skin tends to be oily. Also, some vitamins will actually help complement each other; for example, vitamin D helps the body absorb the nutrients in calcium, which strengthens the bones—a combination that is vital for teenagers.





Eating in Early Adulthood: 20-29

Between the ages of 20 and 29, people often experience a change in lifestyle as they step out of a school environment and into society. As Dr Fong explains, "20 year olds often experience a lot of stress, as there might be an increase in smoking and alcohol consumption and sleep deprivation. Vitamin B can help relieve the body from stress and repair damaged muscles and nerves. Iron will also help carry oxygen to cells in the body, which can help alleviate exhaustion — so an increased intake of iron-rich foods, such as red meats, apples and green vegetables will help." Even though the body is at its strongest at 20-35, too much alcohol will affect its functionality. Dr Fong suggests replenishing the body with plenty of water and vitamin B after consuming large quantities of alcohol. This will help flush out the toxins and avoid dehydration and alcohol poisoning.

Nutrition at 30-39

Stress and emotional issues tend to be prominent among 30-39 year olds, so they should try to cut back on stimulants, such as caffeine, alcohol and peppers, and instead introduce more beans, shellfish and nuts into their diet to acquire magnesium, which will help soothe anxiety and mood swings. In terms of eating habits, people should also aim for small frequent meals, and only eat until they are about 70-80% full.

For a lot of women, 30s is the age to have a child. To prepare for carrying a new life, pregnant women should increase their intake of folic acid, to avoid abnormal development in the baby's brain and spine in the womb. Folic acid can be found in foods such as green vegetables, almonds, black beans, pumpkin, tofu and bananas.

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Middle-aged Meals: 40-59

The ages of 40-59—middle age—is when the body begins to visibly decline; bone density will decrease, which dairy products can help to replenish to avoid osteoporosis. Maintaining exercise and low levels of stress and taking of a variety of vitamins will help slow down the signs of aging. For women, the menopause tends to occur between 48-52 years old but it can also be earlier for women who experience irregular menstruation. Menopausal women can eat more beans to replenish iron and even take appropriate amounts of hormones to eliminate feeling unwell.

Aging Gracefully: 60+

Once the body hits 60 or over, it will be slower to absorb nutrients and the digestive system will also age, resulting in a less effective sense of taste as well as other symptoms. When choosing their food, the elderly need to pay extra attention and strive for small frequent meals to allow their digestive system time to rest. Cooked foods can be minced and excessively fatty or hard-to-digest foods should be avoided. The elderly should also eat more natural foods and avoid canned and processed foods.



健康與許多個人因素有關，無論是基因遺傳、環境及飲食都會影響到您的健康。健維醫療中心的家庭醫生方玉輝醫生表示：「我們對營養的需求會隨著年齡而有所改變。從孩童、青春至成人的成長階段，最重要是吸收營養，因為他們需要大量的蛋白質和鈣質去增強身體的結構、幫助體內細胞的發展，以及鞏固骨骼的成長。在步入成年階段後，營養會隨著年齡而流失，所以應該著重補充營養，以確保身體可以維持正常的運作。」

幼兒食品

身體對營養的需求在一生當中會不斷改變，兒童的生理發育與新陳代謝能力也與成人不同，所以在營養的配合方面，應該考慮性別及年齡的差異。為確保兒童腦部得到良好發展，以及幫助肌肉和骨骼的生長，除了飲食必須均衡外，攝取適量的維他命A、B及C都非常重要。方醫生建議，父母可以在嬰兒6個月大的時候開始餵食固體食物，避免小朋友過分倚賴奶粉作為主要食糧，因為奶粉雖然含有多種營養素，但始終不是天然食品，進食過量會導致體內吸收過多營養素，反而對身體無益。

步入青春期

青少年正值發育階段，良好的營養可以增加身體抵抗力，並可以支持身體由兒童轉變為成人。方醫生指出，青少年每天至少進食兩份蔬果，可以為身體補充纖維、維他命和礦物質，亦有助改善青春階段因為油脂分泌較多所出現的皮膚問題。除此之外，某些營養素會有互相促進的功用，例如維他命D就是一種可以幫助身體吸收鈣質的營養素，間接有助強化骨骼，是青少年不可或缺的營養素之一。



20-29歲成年人的飲食

從學生時代到踏入社會工作，生活習慣亦有所改變。方醫生說：「20多歲的年輕人會較常出現過度疲勞、煙酒過多、睡眠不足的問題，可透過補充維他命B去舒緩身心的壓力、修補受損的肌肉及神經線。此外，鐵質亦有助將氧運送至其他細胞，減輕身體的疲勞狀況，故日常可以多進食紅肉、蘋果及綠葉蔬菜等食物，增加鐵質的攝取量。」雖然20-35歲之間是身體最強壯的階段，但過量的酒精多少亦會對身體機能造成影響。方醫生建議，在飲用大量酒精後，應大量喝水及補充維他命B，協助身體將酒毒排出，減低出現脫水和酒精中毒的情況。

「在飲食習慣方面，以少吃多餐及每餐維持在7-8成左右的飽足感最為理想。」

30-39歲的營養需要

這個年齡組別的人士出現較多有關壓力及情緒的問題，應減少進食刺激性食物，例如咖啡、酒、辣椒等，要多進食豆類、貝類海產、堅果及果仁等食物去攝取鎂質，以舒緩神經緊張和情緒暴躁的情況。在飲食習慣方面，以少吃多餐及每餐維持在7-8成左右的飽足感最為理想。

對許多女士來說，30歲是生兒育女的時候。要為孕育一個新生命作好準備，懷孕婦女應增加葉酸的攝取量，以防止嬰兒的大腦和脊柱發展不良，而葉酸可以在綠色蔬菜、杏仁、黑豆、南瓜、豆腐和香蕉等食物中找到。

中年期的膳食：40-59歲

步入中年，身體機能會明顯變差，骨質密度亦會開始降低，乳類製品可以補充鈣質，防止日後出現骨質疏鬆。多運動、保持心境平和及補充多種維他命，則有助減慢老化現象。至於女性方面，更年期一般出現在48-52歲，但有些症狀如經期損耗等，可能出現得更早，女士們可多進食豆類製品補充鐵質，或以適量的荷爾蒙補充劑去減輕身體不適。

愉快晚年：60歲或以上

身體會出現吸收營養變慢、消化系統老化、味覺遲鈍等情況。長者在選擇食物上要份外注意，應少食多餐，讓腸胃有足夠時間休息。煮食時可以將食材稍為切碎，盡量避免肥膩或難以消化的食物。多進食天然食物，減少如罐頭等經過加工的食品。

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