

Healthy LIVING while aging!



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The holidays are over, now what?

By Annie Lindsay, Ph.D.

The holidays are over. The cookies and treats have all been eaten. The relatives are gone, and the decorations are put away. The only thing not gone is all those extra holiday pounds! But before you add any excess stress for yourself or think about “how am I going to diet and lose these extra pounds?” There are a few important things you should know.

Being overweight and obese is a serious problem in the United States and continues to be on the rise. Linked to mortality (death), overweight and obese status is usually measured using body mass index, or BMI, since height and weight charts are generally poor indicators. BMI is calculated from a formula that accounts for both the height and the mass of an individual. Health care providers often use this formula to determine an individual’s healthy weight status to reduce their risk of mortality.

However, BMI has its challenges too and is not an appropriate measurement for everyone. BMI fails to recognize the composition or makeup of individual bodies. Muscular individuals, for example, often weigh more and have more mass. Since muscle is a very dense tissue, it weighs more, therefore incorrectly classifying muscular individuals as “overweight”. Standard BMI charts for adults should also not be used for older adults.

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Bodies change as they age, making BMI values inconsistent and unreliable. Weight can be affected by bone density decreases called osteoporosis and loss of muscle mass known as sarcopenia. Decreases in a person’s height can occur from narrowing disc spaces in the spine over time. None of these are accounted for in the BMI formula.

While maintaining a healthy weight and BMI is important, values for older adults are slightly different from standard BMI charts. Studies have shown that the risk for mortality doesn’t occur in older adults (>65) until they reach a BMI of 33 (kg/m²). But more importantly, there is a risk for those with a BMI of less than 23 (kg/m²). When unintended weight loss occurs, there is often a decline in muscle mass. This decline decreases one’s ability to do daily tasks, such as getting dressed and preparing a meal, increasing the risk of falling, which can lead to injury and death.

So, forget about the dieting. Focus on making healthy choices, being physically active and increasing that muscle mass, even if it raises your BMI a little.

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{Weight (lb)}}{\text{Height (inches)}^2}$$

For more information about Healthy Aging education or resources, please visit our website: extension.unr.edu and search “Healthy Aging” or contact healthyaging@unr.edu.

Healthy Weight for Older Adults

Managing your weight as you age can be important for mobility, strength and overall wellness. Explore a wide variety of options for navigating lifestyle habits, like eating nutritious foods and getting regular physical activity. Approaches to weight loss must consider inadvertent loss of muscle mass, an increased risk of hip fracture with weight loss, and the relationship between living a quality life and being overweight as an older adult.

Serving and Portion Sizes: How Much Should I Eat?

Eating a variety of foods from each food group will help you get the nutrients you need.

The National Institute of Aging suggests that people 50 or older should follow the Healthy U.S. Style Eating

- Vegetables — 2 to 3 cups
- Fruits — 1½ to 2 cups
- Grains — 5 to 8 ounces
- Dairy — 3 cups (fat-free or low-fat)
- Protein Foods — 5 to 6½ ounces
- Oils — 5 to 7 teaspoons

Don't forget to register for and/or tune in to our live cooking series sponsored by AARP Nevada, *Simply Delicious: Easy, Healthy Meals with Chef Suzy*. January's episode will air on Wed., Jan. 8 at 11 a.m. Helping you turn over a new leaf, this session will feature leafy greens in a kale salad highlighted with a pomegranate and lemon vinaigrette dressing. Register at: <https://bit.ly/CookingWithChefSuzy>.



Winterize Your Wardrobe

Wearing several layers of loose clothing will help trap warm air between layers. Also, consider wearing a hat, scarf, gloves or mittens as body heat can be lost through your head, hands and feet.

View more on the CDC page at: <https://bit.ly/3CHdyXB>.

Hypothermia and Medications

Hypothermia occurs when a person's body temperature drops below normal and stays low for a long period of time. With older age, the body's ability to endure long periods of exposure to cold is lowered. Check with your doctor to see if any prescription or over the counter medications you are taking may increase your risk for hypothermia. For more information, visit: <https://bit.ly/3oQw8aW>.

Orange Oatmeal Pancakes

January is National Oatmeal Month! Here is an easy and delicious recipe to enjoy oats in your diet.

Did you know that oatmeal is cholesterol-free, low-fat, and a good source of fiber? The fiber in oatmeal can help lower your LDL (or lousy cholesterol) levels. Make sure you check the ingredients of your favorite oatmeal for any added sugar or fat.

Ingredients:

- ½ cup all-purpose flour
- ½ cup whole wheat flour
- ½ cup quick oats
- 1 Tablespoon baking powder
- ¼ teaspoon salt
- 1 large egg
- ¾ cup orange juice
- ½ cup nonfat milk (or milk substitute)
- 2 Tablespoons canola oil
- non-stick cooking spray



Directions: 1) In a large bowl, combine flours, oats, baking powder and salt. Mix well. 2) In another large bowl, crack egg, beat lightly with fork. 3) Add orange juice, milk (or milk substitute) and canola oil to egg. Mix well. 4) Spray large skillet with non-stick cooking spray. Heat over medium-high heat. 5) Add wet ingredients to dry ingredients. Stir just until dry ingredients are moistened. Do not overmix. 6) Pour ¼ cup batter onto hot skillet for each pancake. Adjust heat as needed to avoid burning. 7) Flip pancakes when bubbles appear on top of the batter and the edges are slightly browned - about three to four minutes. Cook until second side is lightly browned - about two to three minutes. For complete nutritional facts, visit: <https://bit.ly/3G2E67I>.

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