



## Eating Healthy to Manage Symptoms

A healthy diet can slow the onset of many diseases and help seniors manage the symptoms and impacts of disease on lifestyle and longevity.

Good nutrition plays an important role in overall health and can be especially important for seniors. Seniors, their families, or their caregivers should consult a doctor about each senior's nutritional requirements.

Comfort Keepers® can play an important role in helping seniors understand how a healthy diet can be beneficial in managing the following conditions:

- **High blood pressure and high cholesterol.** Low-sodium and low-fat food choices can help manage these conditions.
- **Diabetes.** This condition is present in nearly 22 percent of people 65 and older, according to the National Diabetes Education Program. To manage diabetes, seniors should control weight, drink plenty of water, and eat whole grains, multi-colored fruits and vegetables, small amounts of healthy fats, lean poultry, and low-fat dairy. It is also important for diabetic seniors to follow up with their physicians regularly for proper medical management, as diabetes can also lead to other health concerns.
- **Dementia and Alzheimer's disease.** These diseases may be lessened by consuming fish containing omega-3 long-chain polyunsaturated fatty acids, according to a SeniorJournal.com study of almost 15,000 senior citizens in seven countries. The spice turmeric and cruciferous (broccoli, cauliflower, and related vegetables) or green, leafy vegetables also show promise in the fight against Alzheimer's disease.
- **Vision loss.** This is the second greatest fear, next to death, among the elderly, according to research from the Jean Mayer USDA Human Nutrition Research Center on Aging at Tufts University. One in three seniors over the age of 75 will develop age-related macular degeneration (AMD), which has no cure and can lead to blindness, and many will face cataracts.  
  
High levels of antioxidants, vitamins C and E, beta-carotene, lutein, zeaxanthin, zinc, and copper may significantly reduce the risk of AMD and associated vision loss.  
  
Seniors who eat complex carbohydrates instead of simple sugars (whole grains versus processed white flours and refined sugars) have a lower risk of developing cataracts and AMD. Dietary choices to help prevent AMD may also help prevent heart disease and cancer. Diets high in omega-3 fatty acids also have vision benefits.

*Note: Seniors, their families, or their caregivers should consult a doctor about the senior's nutritional requirements.*



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