



DIETETICS

Men's Health Advice

By OSCAR Care Group Dietitian, Emmanuel Shamou

With thanks to modern medicine and higher standards of living many more of us are living longer than our preceding generations. Although we have seen an increase in our average national lifespan within the last century, there has also been an increase in death rates associated with particular diseases and conditions. In men over the age of 65, the main causes are heart disease, dementia and certain cancers.

A healthy diet is essential to leading an overall healthy lifestyle. Ensuring that we are fueling our bodies with adequate levels of vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates, protein and healthy fats from a wide range of food sources is a great place to start. Food choices from several food groups should be consumed in moderation including discretionary food items. Long term poor food choices of discretionary food and poor lifestyle choices can be detrimental to our health.



As men get older, their physical activity decreases and their nutrition requirements also change.

The Australian Guide to healthy eating (AGHE) has developed recommendations for serving sizes for different food groups based on the best available scientific evidenced about food and nutrition for men over 65.

So what are 5 things that men over 65 need to know?





As a Dietitian I get to work with and meet so many new people every day. I especially love that there is no “one size fits all” approach to nutritional management and it is all tailored to the individual.

I completed my Masters degree in 2015 at La Trobe University. I then went into private practice in regional Victoria & transitioned into Aged Care which I enjoy so much!
Emmanuel Shamou

5 Men's Health Tips

1. Healthy Weight

It is important to maintain a healthy weight and to remain within a healthy weight range. In fact it is recommended that we remain between a BMI of 24–30. The reason behind this is to help prevent malnutrition.

Each year as we get older, we naturally lose lean muscle mass. However this is further exacerbated and accelerated with reduced movement or lack of exercise or with some chronic diseases.

By preventing malnutrition this can assist with slowing down further disease progression or avoid certain different types of infections. Being within a healthy weight range can also mean there is a better chance of recovery if you are experiencing an acute illness.



2. Five Food Groups

Ensure to include food from a variety of the 5 food groups.

The five food groups include vegetables and legumes/beans, fruit, grain foods, lean meat and poultry and dairy.

Incorporating a variety of foods from each of the groups means that we get different nutrients for our bodies whether it's energy, protein, calcium or a plethora of vitamins and minerals. It is worth noting that not all fats are bad but fats that come from avocado, peanut butter and other nuts are healthy. They can help with reversing the potential consequences of clogged up arteries or even help decelerate the progression of some dementias.

[How to](#) eat from the five food groups.



3. Change unhealthy habits

Change any unhealthy lifestyle habits. It's true that old habits die hard and that long term change won't happen overnight.

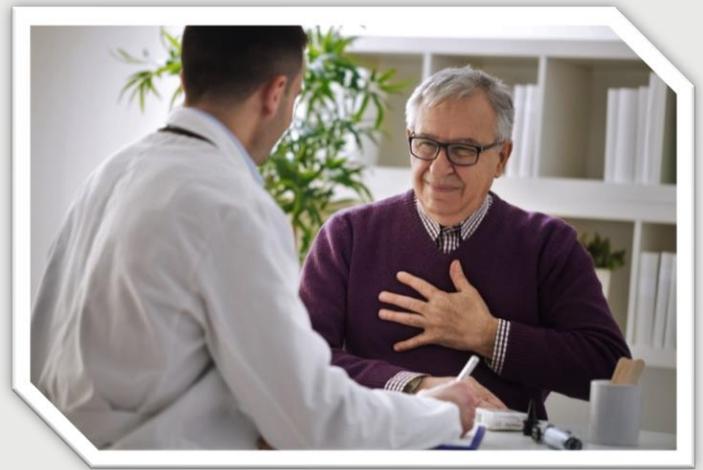
Lifestyle factors such as smoking, drinking and physical activity (or lack thereof) can really impact someone's overall health.

Aiming to quit smoking is a good start. Also aim for 30–45 minutes of physical activity each day. If you've never done any exercise previously then it's best to consult your doctor beforehand.

4. Don't stop it but swap it.

It's usually not about what you can't have but what you can have. There's the misconception that dietitians are always out to restrict food however this is in fact the exact opposite. This also includes discretionary foods such as ice cream, chocolate, lollies and pastries.

Food is meant to be enjoyed however ensuring that it is done in moderation and that these discretionary foods don't replace more nutritious foods. For example, instead of 3 scoops of ice cream gradually reducing it down to 1 scoop.



5. Communicate!

Have someone you can talk to.

It is not uncommon for men over 65 to experience depression or even anxiety. This can be quite profound especially as you may have to deal with one or more debilitating illnesses.

It is important to know that you don't have to remain in that negative head space and that there is always someone you can reach out to. This may be a family member, a good friend or even a medical or health professional.

It always helps to talk to someone about what may be burdening you. Doing so can help get a load of your chest!

It is important to keep in mind that these are very general suggestions and that there is no 'one size fits all' approach to nutrition. If you're looking to maximise your health and nutrition, then it is best to speak with an Accredited Practising Dietitian who can tailor make a nutrition plan best suited to your individual needs.

We can help with nutritional recommendations for you or someone you care for.
For further information, contact **OSCAR Care Group's** Dietitians.

