

3 15 Years
Supporting
Seniors

6 Fall Season
Nutrition Tips
for Seniors



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The Newsletter of INDEPENDENT YOU Senior Services

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Beating the Winter Blues for Seniors

During the winter months, many seniors find themselves feeling down. Whether it's due to the cold weather, shorter days, the holidays coming to an end or reminders of missed loved ones, seasonal sadness can often creep in during this time of year.

Are you or a senior loved one experiencing sadness this time of year? If so, we hope our tips below can help to brighten each day and make the most of the season. Please note that we encourage you to contact your doctor if your sad feelings last for several weeks or if your symptoms keep you from living a healthy life.

1) Brighten Your Home – The vitamin D from natural light can help to improve your mood. Make it a daily routine to open your window coverings including blinds and curtains. Ask someone to help by trimming the trees or bushes that are keeping light from entering your home. If you still feel like you're lacking natural light, getting vitamin D firsthand by heading outdoors can also help – just make sure to dress warm!

2) Anticipate an Event – Whether you're looking forward to an upcoming party or celebration, planning to redecorate for the spring or waiting for a package to arrive, anticipating

some type of event can help to create positive feelings and excitement. If you can't think of something to look forward to, then create something! Invite your grandchildren or a friend over for a visit, plan an outing with a loved one or buy yourself a special treat.

3) Stick to a Schedule – When experiencing the winter blues, it can be tempting to alter your schedule to avoid activities and socialization – and hibernate instead. For example, if you prepared dinner at a certain time every day, try to stick to that same schedule.

4) Eat a Balanced Diet – Eating a balanced diet is essential for older adults and is a natural way to boost your mood and energy. Provide your body with the right combination of proteins, carbohydrates, dairy products, fruits and vegetables. Avoid the temptation to chow down on unhealthy snacks, and instead, snack on complex carbohydrates and super foods such as hummus, blueberries and Greek yogurt.

5) Stay Active – Exercise, while important all year round, can be vital to lifting you up during the winter months. You can exercise indoors or dress in layers and take your exercise outdoors for some fresh air, if the temperature isn't too cold. Stretching,

7 TIPS TO BEAT THE WINTER BLUES

- 1. BRIGHTEN YOUR HOME**
Vitamin D from natural light can help to improve your mood. Make it a daily routine to open your blinds and curtains.
- 2. ANTICIPATE AN EVENT**
Anticipate an upcoming event, or create something to look forward to such as inviting your grandchildren or friend to visit. This can create positive feelings and excitement.
- 3. STICK TO A SCHEDULE**
Avoid the temptation to alter your schedule to avoid activities and socialization. Stick to your every day schedule.
- 4. EAT A BALANCED DIET**
Eating the right combination of proteins, carbohydrates, dairy, fruits and vegetables is a natural way to boost your mood and energy.
- 5. STAY ACTIVE**
Exercise can be vital to lifting up your mood during the winter months. Stretching, walking and lifting light weights are a few ideas to get you started.
- 6. ACCOMPLISH A GOAL**
Motivate yourself by adding a goal to your to-do list, big or small, and once it's finished, cross it off.
- 7. SOCIALIZE WITH OTHERS**
Lift your spirits and shift your perspective by being around others. Attend a church service or volunteer in your community.

walking and lifting light weights are a couple of ideas to get you started. Maybe now is a good time to get a treadmill or stationary bike for your house!

6) Accomplish a Goal – If you've been putting off a task, whether big or small, now is the time to tackle it. Add it to your to-do list, and once it's finished, cross it off. This can help you feel motivated and may entice you to take on other items from your list.

7) Socialize – Being around other people and/or talking to them can lift your spirits. Get together with

friends or family or simply give them a call. Attending a church service or volunteering in the community are other great ways to be around people, spark conversation and shift your perspective.

Don't forget that feeling sad during the winter is somewhat common among many seniors, so if you are sharing the feelings described in this article, please know you aren't alone. If you have additional ideas that may help others with their seasonal sadness, we'd love for you to comment with them below! Always remember to consult with your healthcare professional if changing your exercise routine or diet, or if you are concerned about your sad feelings.



Congratulations to Independent You, Senior Services on 15 Years of Service!

Independent You, Senior Services, is proud to celebrate its 15th anniversary!

Founded in November 2010 by Administrator Mary Beth Crosson with just one client, the company has grown into a thriving agency supported by a dedicated team of caregivers, office staff, and Geriatric Care Managers. In 2013, co-founder Joanne McCarty joined the organization, helping guide its continued growth and success.

For the past 15 years, Independent You has been committed to providing compassionate, high-quality care and support to seniors throughout our community—helping clients maintain their independence and dignity in the comfort of their own homes.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to everyone who has supported us along the way—our clients, caregivers, staff, and community partners. We couldn't have reached this milestone without you!

Here's to celebrating 15 years of exceptional service and compassionate care—and to many more years of making a difference in the lives of seniors and their families.

Independent You Senior Services is proud to serve the aging community with excellence and compassion. Our team includes highly skilled Geriatric Care Managers, Nurses, and dedicated caregivers who work collaboratively to ensure each client receives the highest standard of personalized care. We are committed to promoting independence, dignity, and quality of life for every individual we serve.

At Independent You, we believe that strong communication grows from genuine connection, compassion, and service. We continually seek meaningful ways to engage

with the people and communities around us, and we're excited to share some of the recent ways our team has been making a difference beyond our everyday work

We're Just Getting Started

At Independent You, our mission extends beyond care—we're here to build relationships, foster trust and be a positive force in every community we serve. If you know of a community initiative or partnership opportunity we should explore, let us know! We are always looking for new ways to make a difference.

CELEBRATING EXCELLENCE: Our Caregivers of the Month 2025

At Independent You, Inc., we're proud of our compassionate and skilled team of caregivers who bring kindness, reliability, and respect to every client they serve. Their dedication and professionalism truly make a difference each day.

We are delighted to recognize three outstanding caregivers for their exceptional service and commitment:

Khadija L. – June Caregiver of the Month

Khadija is known for her gentle, patient nature and her ability to make clients feel valued and comfortable. Her reliability and genuine compassion shine through in everything she does.

Maxine C. – July Caregiver of the Month

Maxine's positive attitude and strong work ethic inspire everyone around her. She consistently goes above and beyond to ensure her clients receive the best care possible.

Mavis G. – August Caregiver of the Month

Mavis brings warmth, professionalism, and an incredible sense of dedication to her role. Her clients appreciate her kind spirit and the joy she brings to each visit.

We are truly grateful for Khadija, Maxine, and Mavis—and for all our caregivers who make Independent You, Inc. a place where compassion and excellence meet.



Khadija L.



Maxine C.



Mavis G.



Mary Beth Crosson and Joanne McCarty
IY Administrators
McLean Farmers Market



Lisa Bagby
Geriatric Care Manager
Capitol Hill-Senior Advocacy



Belen Eshetu, LPN
Walk Fit Blood Pressure Monitoring
Virginia Hospital Center



Joanne McCarty and Diana Gilbert (GCM)
VAELA (Virginia Academy of Elder Law Attorneys), Richmond, VA

Sonja Gatling, Director of Nursing
and Belen Eshetu, LPN
Home for Life Expo, Fairfax City, VA





Fall Season Nutrition Tips for Seniors

Nutritious food keeps our bodies healthy and gives us energy to keep moving. As the years progress and our bodies change, so, too, do the nutritional requirements for maintaining a healthy, active lifestyle. With autumn on the horizon, it's a great time to highlight healthful options to enhance daily meals. Let's look at some enticing fall season nutrition tips for seniors.

Lean Proteins

Muscles naturally decrease in mass and strength as we age, which can lead to greater risk of falls and breaks, physical difficulties and mobility issues, and loss of independence. For seniors, one of the keys to maintaining muscle tissue is a protein-rich diet. And since fall is the ideal season for comfort foods, we have some suggestions for adding healthy proteins with minimal fat.

- Lean ground beef and pork tenderloin are great sources of protein that can serve as a main dish or be incorporated into chili or a hearty

stew (with your favorite seasonal veggies).

- Skinless chicken and turkey offer substantial amounts of protein with minimal fat and can be used in creamy or broth-based soups.
- Eggs provide a versatile option for protein and good cholesterol as well as other key nutrients that can help safeguard against chronic disease.
- Fish such as salmon and tuna are packed with protein and omega-3s, which promote heart and brain health. Cod and halibut also provide a lot of protein with fewer calories.
- Plant-based meat substitutes provide a high-protein option for use in stews and chili, tacos, or sloppy joes.

Fruits and Vegetables

No matter your age, fruits and veggies should be a mealtime staple. Chock full of essential vitamins and minerals while being a good source of

fiber, these colorful and flavorful additions are power foods that help prevent chronic diseases and promote overall well-being. Their low caloric value and fat content makes them a great part of a healthy, balanced diet. And fall is the perfect time to harvest your favorite produce or try something new, such as these seasonal favorites:

- Cranberries reach peak ripeness in the fall, making it the ideal time to add their sweet-tart flavor to salads, breads, desserts, and more. They're also rich in antioxidants and support urinary tract health.
- High in fiber, antioxidants, and vitamins, pears are beneficial for digestion and heart health and can be enjoyed either fresh or roasted.
- Antioxidant-rich cauliflower is a versatile veggie that can be eaten raw, roasted, mashed, or used as a substitute for rice. It also contains anti-inflammatory compounds for protection against chronic diseases.
- Grapes make a great snack or can be added to salads. They're packed with antioxidants and other nutrients, which can benefit heart health, blood pressure, and brain function.
- Rich in vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, sweet potatoes are known to aid in immune and digestive function, improve vision, and possibly lower your risk for chronic diseases.
- Many fall vegetables—such as carrots, mushrooms, kale, celery, squash, and more—can be added to comforting soups to add flavor, texture, color, and a whole host of essential vitamins and minerals.

Whole Grains

Whole grains are a good source of vitamins, minerals, and antioxidants, all of which are essential for maintaining overall health. For seniors, these

essential nutrients can help boost the immune system and protect against age-related diseases and illnesses. And fall is the perfect time to take advantage of a variety of benefits whole grains have to offer. By including them in seasonal dishes, you're both adding flavor and boosting nutrition.

- Start the day with whole-grain oatmeal, cereals, granola, or whole wheat toast for heart health and digestive support.
- Whole-grain crackers or popcorn provide healthy snack options that are low in calories and a good source of fiber.
- Quinoa or barley in soups and stews adds an abundance of vitamins, minerals, and fiber to help lower cholesterol and improve digestion.
- Brown rice's high nutritional content and heart-healthy attributes make it a great option for a side dish.

Hydration

Staying hydrated is a major factor in maintaining organ function as well as overall health. With cooler fall temperatures, it may be more difficult to remember to drink water. Additionally, the body's ability to recognize thirst decreases with age. So, seniors are often at higher risk for dehydration without even knowing it.

Even if you don't feel thirsty, remember to hydrate. Adequate water intake helps maintain blood pressure, regulate body temperature, and keep joints flexible, which can also help prevent falls. Warm teas and soups as well as water-rich fruits also help with hydration while providing flavor and nutrients.

We hope these nutrition tips for seniors will get you thinking about how you can incorporate new and favorite seasonal elements into your meals this fall and beyond.



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personalized,
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