

## *Eating Well as We Age*

As Americans age, many have trouble eating well! Some of the health problems faced include experiencing an upset stomach shortly after eating, a lack of appetite due to being alone or lonely, or an inability to chew properly caused by various dental issues. Some aging Americans have transportation issues, making grocery shopping an obstacle. Still others may experience difficulty with cooking and preparing meals. Many aging Americans are on fixed incomes and may not have the financial means to shop for items that are more convenient and easier to prepare.

Alternatives to various eating related issues include:



### ***Problems with chewing:***

Instead of:  
 Fresh fruit

Try:  
 fruit juices and soft canned fruit, such as applesauce, peaches, and pears

Raw vegetables

vegetable juices and creamed or mashed cooked vegetables

Meat

ground meat, eggs, milk, cheese, yogurt, and foods made with milk, such as pudding and cream soups

Sliced bread

cooked cereals, rice, bread pudding, and soft cookies

### ***Problems with upset stomach:***

Instead of:  
 Milk

Try:  
 milk foods that may not bother you, such as cream soups, pudding, yogurt, and cheese

Vegetables such  
 Broccoli and cabbage

vegetable juices or other vegetables such as green beans, carrots, or peas

Fresh fruit

fruit juices and canned soft fruits

### ***Problems with shopping or preparing meals:***

Maybe you can not drive anymore or you may have trouble walking or standing for long periods of time. If this is the case, try keeping a grocery list near the phone and consider asking your local church or synagogue for volunteer help. Sign up for help from a local volunteer center or ask a family member or neighbor to shop for you.

If it is difficult to hold pots, pans and cooking utensils or standing for long periods of time, consider using a microwave oven to cook frozen dinners. These can be made ahead of time by stores or family members. Another option is taking part in group meal programs offered through senior citizen programs or have meals delivered to your home.

### ***No appetite:***

Older adults who live alone may feel lonely at mealtime and have no desire to eat. Foods may not taste as good due to some medicines being taken. Attempt to eat with family and friends and ask your physician if the medicine prescribed can affect loss of appetite or taste problems. If so, discuss the option of changing the medications. Remember that spices and herbs add additional flavor to food.



### ***Short on Money:***

Buy low cost foods such as dried beans, peas, rice, and pasta or prepared foods such as soups, canned beans, and instant rice. Clip coupons from magazines and newspapers, and look for foods on sale. Register to receive food stamps by calling the food stamp office listed under your parish government in the blue pages of the phone book.

Proper nutrition is important to good health. Eating well, exercising, drinking water, visiting a doctor, and getting ample rest are steps to a more healthier YOU!

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