

Eat Well Be Well: How Good Nutrition Impacts Health and Aging

Mimi Cunningham, MA, RDN, LD, CDCES

Dietitian-Nutritionist

Certified Diabetes Care & Education Specialist

Idaho Nutrition & Integrative Wellness

LEARN March 10, 2022

Thoughts

- **Why** pay attention to nutrition as medicine?
- **What** are key health issues impacting the mature adult?
- **How** do we manage food and nutrition challenges during the mature years?

Good Medicine or Bad Medicine



GLENDAL, Calif.--([BUSINESS WIRE](#))--IHOP is serving up that “Saturday morning feeling” all week long with a new limited-time menu of Cereal Pancakes and Shakes. The IHOP culinary team joined forces with Cinnamon Toast Crunch™, Cap’n Crunch’s Crunch Berries® and Fruity Lucky Charms™ to create a pancake and milkshake lineup full of wow-worthy flavors, eye-catching colors and plenty of cereal to add that familiar crunch to your breakfast.

What is our problem? Genetics or Lifestyle?

- Overweight + obesity: 74%
 - Obesity: 43%
- Chronic diseases
 - Heart disease
 - Stroke
 - Cancer
 - Type 2 diabetes
 - Chronic complications: GERD, sleep apnea, joint replacements, chronic kidney disease, non-alcoholic fatty liver disease

Diabetes: Big Problem

- 13% of Americans >20 years have known diabetes
- 29% >65 years have known diabetes (including 5% undiagnosed)
- Estimated 38% (96 million) have pre-diabetes (19% are aware)
- Risk factors: cardiovascular disease, dementia
- Complications: neuropathy, chronic kidney disease, retinopathy, poor oral health

Too Much of a Good Thing For Too Long

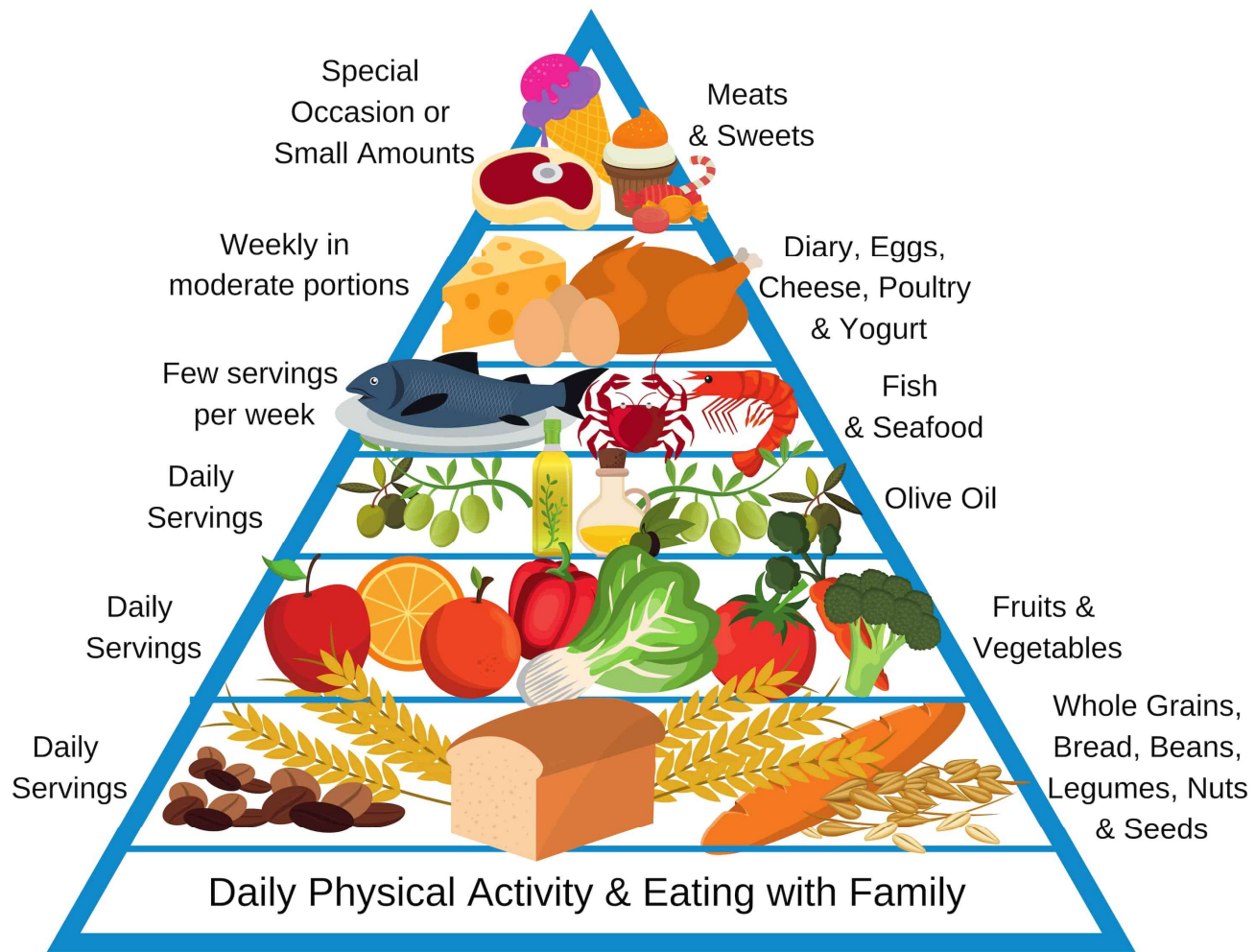
“SAD” or the **Standard American Diet**

- Processed foods
- Sugar
- Fats
- Salt
- Large portions

“Blue Zones”

- <https://www.bluezones.com/live-longer-better/#>
- Okinawa- Japan, Sardinia- Italy, Nicoya- Costa Rica, Ikaria- Greece, Loma Linda- CA
- Characteristics
 - Mediterranean/Plant-based Diets, all except Loma Linda may include wine.
 - Socialization
 - Stress: meditate, nap
 - Exercise: walking, walking, walking, gardening
 - Purpose: meaningful activity, engagement





MEDITERRANEAN DIET

Healthy Food – Good Medicine

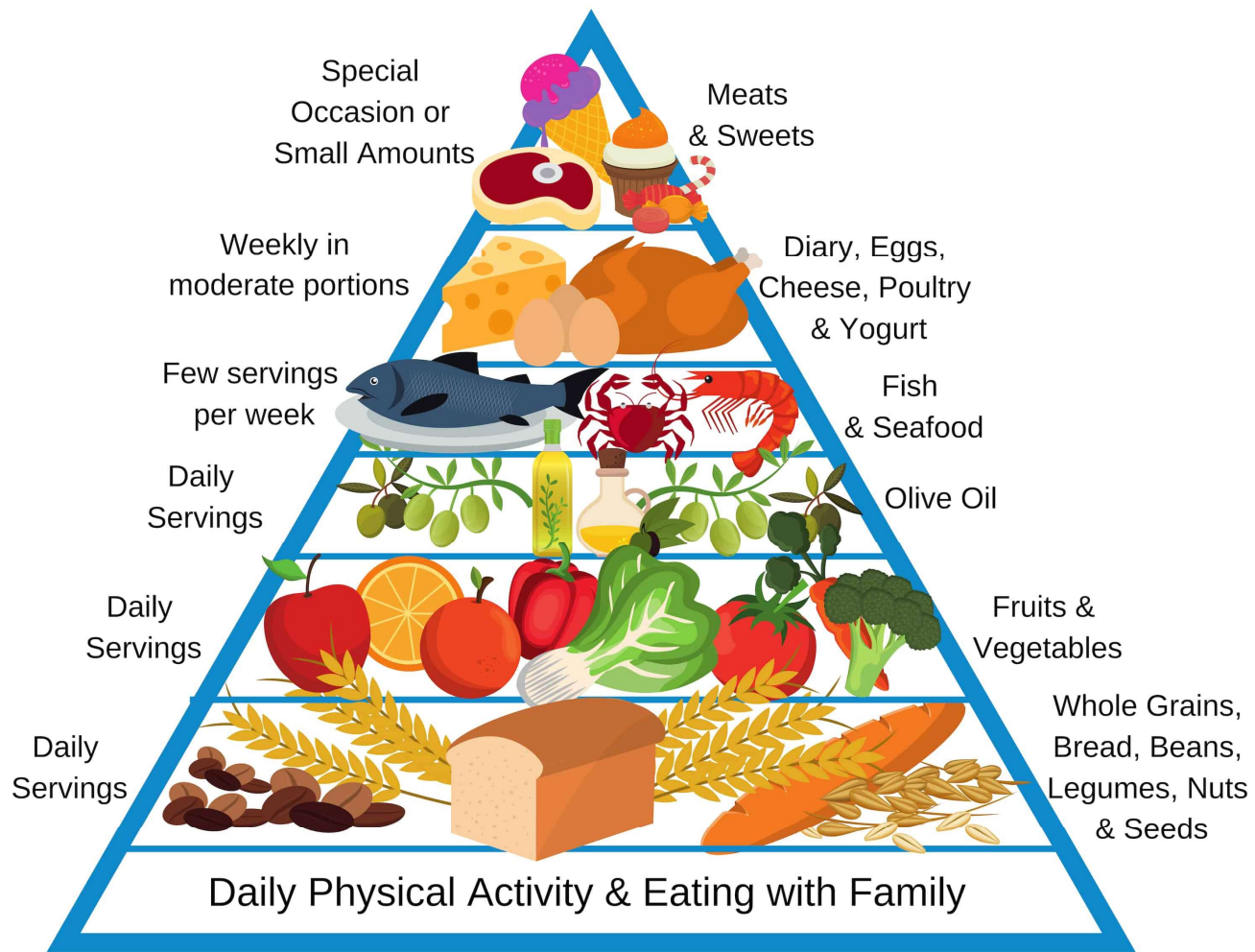
- Vitamins, minerals
- Phytochemicals, omega-3 fatty acids: anti-inflammatory
- Balance of protein, carbohydrates, fat
- Fiber
- Adequate hydration

Supports

- Healthy gut: anti-inflammatory effects, healthy immune system
- Healthy weight
- Improved blood pressure, cholesterol, blood glucose

“Imflammaging:

- Inflammation increases with aging.
- Acute vs. chronic inflammation.
- Inflammation → oxidative stress ↑ free radicals + antioxidants ↓ free radicals.
- Genetics vs. environment
- Diet
 - Mediterranean Diet
 - DASH (Dietary Approaches to Stop Hypertension)
 - Reduce processed foods, saturated fat.



MEDITERRANEAN DIET

Unintentional Loss of Nutrition: Aging

- Nutrition: major determinant of aging well.
- Poor nutrition over time.
- Progression of chronic disease.
- Decline in sensory function = decline in appetite.
 - Impaired sensory hormones.
- Abnormal gastric motility.
- Impaired synthesis of protein affects muscle tissue building and maintenance.
- Ratio of lean tissue to fat tissue shifts to higher fat percentage.

Challenge: Sarcopenia

- **Sarcopenia**: loss of skeletal muscle mass and function.
 - Muscle mass decline accelerates after 75 years.
 - Lack of Vitamin D, adequate calorie and protein intake.
 - Aggravated by obesity, diabetes.
 - Vicious cycle: muscle loss, decline in activity, muscle loss....
 - Decline in quality of life.
 - Increased fall risk.
 - **Prevention**: Vitamin D3, calcium supplementation, review current diet to ensure protein/calories, physical activity including resistance training.

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4269139/>

Challenge: Potential Vitamin-Mineral Deficiencies

- **Calcium + Vitamin D3**: Protect bone loss.
- B vitamins including **B12, folic acid (B9)**, improve cognitive function, nervous system integrity, prevent anemia.
- **Zinc**: supports immune system, cognitive function, anti-inflammatory
- **Vitamin C**: antioxidant, immune system support.

Challenge... the Mouth

- Oral Health
 - Ill fitting dentures, gum disease, diabetes, lack of access oral health care.
 - Poor oral health impairs ability to eat a variety of food.

Challenge: Risk of Malnutrition

- **Frailty**: age-associated declines in physiologic reserve and function across multiorgan systems, leading to increased vulnerability for adverse health outcomes.
 - Poor nutrition over time
 - Chronic disease-inflammation, obesity
- Hospitalized: slower recovery, greater risk for poorer outcomes.
- Frailty Syndrome: An Overview
<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3964027/>

What makes a difference?

- Socialization
- Access to good food
- Food insecurity: cost of food stressing what we get to eat/buy.
- Social determinants of health
- Stress
- Sleep
- Physical activity

- Harvard Health Newsletter
https://www.health.harvard.edu/newsletters/harvard_health_letter
- EatingWell Anti-Inflammation: A Delicious Path to Whole Body Health
- America's Test Kitchen cookbooks
 - Diabetes
 - Plant Based
 - Mediterranean

“Let food be thy medicine and medicine be thy food.”

Hippocrates



13900 West Wainwright Drive

Suite 103

Boise 83713 208-433-9424

www.idahonutritionassociates.org