



Nutrition Information for Older Oconto County Adults

Nutrient Density: Optimize Your Intake!

Some foods are better sources of nutrients than others and it is good to keep as many of these in your diet as possible. This is especially important considering that, although we often eat less as we age, we actually need the same amounts of nutrients- even more in some cases- as we have always needed.

Part of the secret of eating well is choosing foods that are nutrient dense. Such foods supply generous amounts nutrients in relation to the number of calories they supply. Here are a couple examples: Eggs have a high nutrient density because they provide excellent protein and a wide range of vitamins and minerals in proportion to their calorie count.

A serving of watermelon and a 12-ounce soda pop both provide 150 calories, but the watermelon has vitamin C and fiber, while the soda contains only simple sugars or "empty calories."

Nutrient dense foods include fruits and vegetables that are bright or deeply colored, foods that are fortified, and lower fat versions of meats, milk and dairy products. Less nutrient dense foods may be light or whiter in color, may contain a lot of refined sugar, may be refined products (white bread as compared to whole grains), or may contain high amounts of fat for the amount of nutrients compared to similar products (skim milk vs. ice cream).

Make Your Own Healthy Food Choices

See if you can identify foods that are nutrient dense. In the following section, circle the food item from each group that offers the highest nutritional value for the nutrient listed. For an equal amount of calories, which is highest in.....

A. Vitamin C

Banana, Grapes, Red Pepper

B. Fiber

Apple, Apple Sauce, Apple Juice

C. Calcium

Yogurt, Orange Juice, Cottage Cheese

D. Vitamin A

Carrots, Wax Beans, Orange

E. Iron

Bacon, Fish, Egg Yolks

F. Protein

Cheddar Cheese, American Cheese, Ice Cream

G. Overall Nutrients

Cream Pie, Apple Pie, Pizza

H. Overall Nutrients

Kool-Aid, Orange Juice, Tang

I. Potassium

Dried Apricots, Shrimp, Tofu

J. Overall Nutrients

Mashed Potato, Potato Chips, Baked Potato

ANSWERS

**A. Red Pepper B. Apple C. Yogurt D. Carrots E. Egg Yolks F. Cheddar Cheese
G. Pizza H. Orange Juice I. Dried Apricots J. Baked Potato.**

Good nutrition is ageless. It promotes vitality and independence. If you reduce your consumption of calories by eating less, you must make your food choices count by eating a variety of nutrient dense foods from each of the different food groups everyday.