

## DIETARY GUIDELINES DEVELOPED FOR SINGAPORE'S SENIORS

*HPB also launches Healthier Recipes and Healthier Catering Menu for the elderly to ensure that well-balanced meals are now within easy reach*

**Singapore, 24 November 2012:** Good nutrition in one's golden years is imperative in order to stay fit and healthy. As the elderly have unique nutritional requirements, HPB has today launched Dietary Guidelines for Older Adults (aged over 50years).

2. According to HPB's 2010 National Nutrition Survey, only one in four senior citizens consume the recommended daily serving of vegetables, one in four have protein intake below the recommended level while over half have inadequate intakes of calcium. However, over half also have intakes of fat and saturated fat higher than the recommended levels.

3. The new set of dietary guidelines aims to enhance the nutrition intake of the seniors. Broadly, the guidelines embrace the following principles:

- Consume quality, nutrient dense foods over quantity as seniors are less active
- Choose soft foods which are easier to swallow
- Consume calcium-fortified or rich foods due to the loss of bone calcium
- Drink more fluids to counter constipation

4. To help ensure local senior citizens have easy access to healthy and nutritious food which meets the dietary guidelines and is affordable, HPB has also introduced a healthier series of **Simple, Tasty, Affordable Recipes (STAR)** and a healthier catering menu for the community.

5. The set of five recipes have been especially developed with seniors in mind. They are lower in calories, salt, high in fibre and whole grains, and use healthier oils. Yet, the recipes do not compromise on taste and are affordable. The one-dish meal recipes which can serve a family of four people, are easy to prepare and will cost the seniors or their caregivers less than \$5 for each of the following dishes: mee sua with shredded chicken, curried rice, fried noodles, fried brown rice bee hoon with vegetables, and brown rice porridge.

6. The healthier catering menu has been developed for use at senior-centric community events. The menu comprises a selection of senior-friendly dishes which are prepared using healthier ingredients. It contains less saturated fat and salt but more fibre and the dishes are easier to chew as they use soft vegetables such as cabbage and other soft sources of protein and calcium such as bean curd.

7. Said David Ong, MP for Bukit Batok “Providing healthier food choices for residents at community events is very important. I am delighted that HPB has worked to develop a healthier catering menu for community events as it will enable our residents to have healthier food choices. To encourage healthy eating in the constituency, I am pleased that a healthier cooking interest group has been set up in Bukit Batok. The volunteers organise regular healthier cooking demonstrations and supermarket trails for the seniors and caregivers with the aim to drive home the message that healthier food can be affordable and easy to prepare.”

8. Said Ang Hak Seng, CEO, Health Promotion Board “As we age, our bodies change and metabolism slows. We are not required to consume as many calories as we used to, which makes it challenging to consume sufficient protein, vitamins and minerals. It is therefore important for seniors to eat a diet of high nutritional quality that includes foods with more protein, vitamins and minerals but fewer calories. As older adults may have difficulty chewing, they often tend to consume more of foods such as rice, noodles and breads as these foods are soft and fill them up. What is largely lacking in their diet are vegetables and protein-rich foods like meat. To ensure Singapore’s seniors have easy access to a well balanced diet which is affordable, we have introduced this set of healthier recipes.”

9. Considered a Health Promoting hub, the Bukit Batok Constituency is home to health promoting touch points such as health promoting corners at Bukit Batok Community Club, Zone 2 Resident's Committee (RC) Corner, a healthier coffee shop and a walking trail. Regular health promoting activities co-organised by the Community Club, Resident's Committee and HPB include workshops and talks on nutrition, management of chronic diseases, smoking control, physical activity, basic health screening on blood pressure and BMI.

10. HPB will be working with all constituencies to introduce the set of healthier recipes to their senior residents and caregivers and intends to promote the healthier menu to caterers over the coming festive season.

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Annex 1 Factsheet on Dietary Guidelines

Annex 2 Consumption Trends of Vegetables, Proteins, Fat, Saturated Fat and Calcium

## **Annex 1 – Factsheet on Dietary Guidelines**

The Dietary Guidelines for Older Adults is the first of its kind in Singapore. These guidelines are intended for adults over 50 years of age.

### **The importance of a healthy diet for seniors**

As one ages, it is important to ensure that one keeps a healthy diet to ensure the necessary nutrients to protect against chronic illnesses.

It is recommended that seniors:

- Consume quality, nutrient dense foods over quantity as seniors are less active
- Choose soft foods which are easier to swallow
- Consume calcium-fortified or rich foods due to the loss of bone calcium
- Drink more fluids to counter constipation

### **Food Based Recommendations**

<b>Food Group</b>	<b>Recommended Number of Servings*</b>
Brown Rice, wholemeal bread & others	4-6
- <i>Wholegrain foods</i>	2-3
Fruit	2
Vegetables	2
Meat, Beans, Fish & Dairy	3
- <i>Dairy foods or calcium fortified foods</i>	1

#### **\*What is a serving?**

<b>Brown rice, wholemeal bread &amp; others</b>
2 slices bread (60g)
½ bowl** rice (100g)
2 bowls rice porridge (500g)
½ bowl noodles, beehoon or spaghetti (100g)
4 plain biscuits (40g)
1 thosai (60g)
2 chapatis (60g)
1 large potato (180g)
1½ cups plain cornflakes (40g)
2/3 bowl uncooked oatmeal (50g)

<b>Fruit</b>
1 small apple, orange, pear or mango (130g)
1 wedge papaya, pineapple or watermelon (130g)
10 grapes or longans (50g)
1 medium banana
¼ cup dried fruit (40g)
1 cup pure fruit juice (250ml)

<b>Vegetables</b>
150g raw leafy vegetables
100g raw non-leafy vegetables
¾ mug*** cooked leafy vegetables (100g)
¾ mug cooked non-leafy vegetables (100g)
¼ round plate+ cooked vegetables

<b>Meat, Beans, Fish &amp; Dairy</b>
1 palm-size piece meat, fish or poultry (90g)
2 glasses milk (500ml)
2 small blocks soft bean curd (170g)
¾cup*** cooked pulses (peas, beans, lentils) (120g)
5 medium prawns (90g)
3 eggs (150g)‡

#### **NOTE:**

\* All weights listed are for edible portions only

\*\* rice bowl

\*\*\* 250ml

+ 10inch plate

‡ Eggs are high in cholesterol and no more than 4 eggs yolks should be eaten a week

## Recommendations for Seniors to achieve a Healthy Diet

To achieve a healthy diet, seniors can adopt the following healthy recommendations:

### Eat

- Eat more fruit.
- Eat more vegetables, especially dark-green leafy and brightly-coloured ones.
- Eat more calcium-rich foods (calcium-fortified soy milk, tofu, milk, cheese, yoghurt).

### Replace

- Replace refined grains with whole-grains
  - Instead of white rice and white bread, choose brown rice, wholemeal bread and oats.
- Replace saturated & trans fat food with food containing unsaturated fat
  - Instead of deep fried meat, *lemak* dishes and fatty meat, go for lean poultry, fish, tofu and beans
  - Instead of cooking food with lard, ghee or palm oil, choose oils higher in unsaturated fat (e.g. sunflower, canola oils) or those with the Healthier Choice Symbol (HCS)
- Try to have plain water or unsweetened drinks (e.g. Chinese tea) instead of soft drinks, *kopi*, *teh* or other sugar-sweetened drinks. Aim to drink around 8 glasses of water a day, even if you don't feel thirsty.

### Less

- Eat sweet desserts and snacks less often.
- Use less salt and sauces, and cut down on salted and preserved foods.
- For alcohol consumption, men should not drink more than 3 standard drinks\* a day and women no more than 2 standard drinks a day.

*\*One standard drink is equal to 220 ml of beer (about 2/3 of a can), 125 ml of wine (about 1 small glass) or 30 ml of liquor (about 1 shot glass).*

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**Annex 2 - Consumption Trends of Vegetables, Proteins, Fat, Saturated Fat and Calcium**

Age group	Consume $\geq 2$ servings of <b>vegetables</b> daily	<b>Protein</b> intake below recommended levels	<b>Fat</b> intake higher than recommended levels	<b>Saturated fat</b> intake higher than recommended levels	Inadequate intakes of <b>calcium</b>
<b>18-29</b>	33.9%	11.2%	71.7%	80.5%	24.4%
<b>50-69</b>	26.8%	25.3%	53.3%	61.5%	52.3%

Source: HPB's 2010 National Nutrition Survey

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