



# Nutrition News

Published by the Area Agency on Aging of Dane County

## March is National Nutrition Month

### Stay Nourished on ANY Budget.

Learn cooking, food preparation and meal planning skills.

- Cook at home more often
- Plan your weekly meals by looking in your pantry first
- Shop with a list and check out sales

Learn about community food resources

- Food Share
- Local Food Banks/Pantries
- Senior Farmers' Market Program (June–Oct)

### Practice Food Safety at Home.

Only buy food you plan to use

- Bought too much? Freeze it before it goes bad
- Throw out food past its expiration date

Cook, cool, and thaw foods the right way

- Allow frozen meat and seafood to thaw overnight in the fridge. NOT on the countertop.
- Large amounts of leftovers should be divided into small portions and put in shallow containers for quicker cooling in the refrigerator.
- Cook your proteins to the correct internal temperature by using a thermometer. No guessing allowed!



2024 NATIONAL NUTRITION MONTH\*

A CAMPAIGN BY

THE ACADEMY OF NUTRITION AND DIETETICS

### Eat a Variety of Foods.

- Fruits, vegetables, grains, protein, dairy, and healthy fats
- Incorporate favorite cultural, traditional foods
- Eat foods in various forms: fresh, frozen, canned, or dried
- Try new foods or global cuisines

### Eat with the Environment in Mind.

- Get creative with leftovers and ways to reduce food waste
- Buy foods in season and from local farmers when possible
- Grow food at home or in a community garden. Try starting with one tomato plant and see how that goes!

## Light, Low-Calorie, Multigrain, and Organic Labeling

Sometimes, food and beverage packaging includes terms that may try to convince the consumer the food is healthy. To help avoid confusion, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) sets specific rules for what food manufacturers can call “light,” “low,” “reduced,” “free,” and other terms. This type of labeling may have little to do with how nutritious the food is. Here are some examples and what they mean:

**Light.** Light products are processed to reduce either calories or fat. This may sound healthy, but some “light” products are simply watered down. Check carefully to see if anything has been added to make up for the reduced calories and fat, such as sugar.

**Low-fat, low-calorie, low-carb.** These foods have a legal limit to how many calories, grams of fat, or carbohydrates (carbs) they can contain per serving. However, if a serving size is very small, you may end up eating multiple servings in one sitting, ultimately consuming the same amount of fat, calories, and carbs as the regular version of the food.

**Multigrain.** This sounds healthy but only means that a product contains more than one type of grain. Unless the product is marked as whole grain, it’s possible the grains are all refined grains, which have likely lost important nutrients during processing.

**Organic.** Products declared organic must be produced without conventional pesticides, synthetic fertilizers, biotechnology, or ionizing radiation. Organic animals must be fed organic feed and not be injected with hormones or antibiotics. Remember, organic foods may still have the same number of calories, fats, proteins, and carbs as a nonorganic food.

While these descriptions or terms are regulated by the FDA, others aren’t, so always check the nutrition label to see if the product matches your healthy eating goals.

What will you do during National Nutrition month to focus on YOU? Sign up for the 2-hour nutrition class below. You can attend by calling in on your phone (and listening to the information) or attend on your computer or smart phone via Zoom.

## Stepping Up Your Nutrition

**Malnutrition can cause muscle loss, dizziness and increase your risk of falls.** 50% of older adults are at risk. Learn more about preventing malnutrition and keeping your strength to prevent future falls. Join us for a 2-hour virtual workshop to learn:

- How nutrition affects falls
- Why muscle matters
- How to get enough protein and fluid
- What you can do to eat better & improve your health

**Tuesday, March 19: 2-4 p.m.**

**Where: Online via Zoom or by Phone**

**Cost:** Free, with option to donate

\$5 to cover class materials/postage

**Facilitator:** Shannon Gabriel, RDN, CD  
Registered Dietitian Nutritionist & Healthy Aging  
Coordinator at Area Agency on Aging of Dane County

**Register by March 8. Contact:**

Shannon at 608-261-5678 or

Gabriel.Shannon@countyofdane.com



## Free Nutrition Counseling

Personal nutrition counseling is offered to adults age 60+ looking for information on ways to improve their overall health. Appointments are offered via phone, Zoom, or as a home-visit. Any nutrition-related questions or concerns can be discussed. Common topics include: prediabetes and diabetic diets, severe weight loss, difficulties chewing or swallowing, poor appetite, constipation or chronic diarrhea, learning a newly prescribed eating plan after a health diagnosis, and basic older adult nutrition. To learn more about this *free* community resource or to schedule an appointment, contact Shannon (*below*).

### Nutrition News—Jan, Feb, March 2024

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