



# BRYN MAWR TERRACE

MAIN LINE SENIOR CARE ALLIANCE

A Healthy Tradition of Care and Wellness

## Tips For Eating Safely As You Age

Maintaining health and safety is important for seniors. Eating the right foods can improve mobility, mental alertness and overall well-being. In addition to this, eating safe foods gives caregivers peace of mind that their loved one will be able to comfortably eat their meal. Watching out for nutrition and safety will help seniors lead fulfilling and energetic lives.

### **Nutrition:**

These categories break down the essentials of what seniors need in their everyday diet to lead a safe, healthy life.

- **Fruits and Vegetables.** Colorful foods like blueberries, cherries, spinach and kale are full of nutrients. They can be eaten at any time of the year because they don't lose nutrients when they're frozen.
- **Protein.** Seniors need to eat plenty of lean protein. If it's not lean protein, it could have saturated fat that can lead to bad cholesterol. Poultry, fish and nuts are good sources of lean protein and should be served in small portions.
- **Dairy.** Calcium is incredibly important for senior health and dairy contains a great amount of it. Vitamin D, also found in dairy, helps keep bones healthy. As people get older, it gets more difficult for their bodies to make Vitamin D, so incorporating plenty of dairy in one's diet will strengthen bones.
- **Whole Grains.** These foods are rich with fiber and B vitamins and boost energy.
- **Omega-3s.** These are fatty acids that promote heart health and reduce the risk of heart attacks. Omega-3s are found in fish and fish oil.

### **Safety:**

Along with nutrition, caregivers need to be aware of safer and easier foods for seniors to eat. When it comes to issues with chewing, swallowing or motor skills, there are simple changes or substitutions to solve these problems.

- **Soft foods.** Instead of serving foods that are tough and take a lot of chewing effort, substitute them with softer foods. Stews, shredded or cut meats are much safer for those who have trouble with chewing.
- **Finger foods.** If seniors have impaired vision or motor skills, using utensils like forks, spoons and knives can be frustrating. Choosing to eat finger foods like chicken nuggets, cut up fruits and veggies with dip, cheese sticks and finger sandwiches will make mealtimes easier and



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safer. Special silverware and dishes are also available to help make eating easier and more enjoyable.

- **Smoothies.** Typically a breakfast-type food, plenty of vitamins can be added to smoothies so seniors can get nutrition in a simple and delicious way.

## **Making Meal Times Special:**

When it comes to eating safely, seniors need to maintain an appetite. To encourage eating behavior in seniors, make mealtimes significant times of the day. This can be done by doing the following:

- **Eat meals with family and friends.** Being with loved ones and seeing others eat not only encourages eating, it makes the experience enjoyable.
- **Decorate the dining area.** Eat meals around the same time each day and use silverware and placemats. Candles or background music can be other signs that it's a mealtime.
- **Say a few words before the meal starts.** This could be religious or just giving thanks that everyone is there together. The idea is to have an official start to the meal.
- **Get everyone involved in the meal.** Include the loved one in conversation or let them help set the table or clean up after. Feeling like they are contributing to the meal is a great way to make memories and have good experiences when it comes to mealtimes.

Having a healthy diet comprised of nutritious and safe foods will help seniors improve their well-being. The social aspect of meals enhances their mental state and makes mealtimes a fun experience for all.

## **A Healthy Tradition of Care and Wellness**

Located near Bryn Mawr Hospital, Bryn Mawr Terrace – part of [Main Line Senior Care Alliance](#) – has provided exceptional care and services to seniors and their families since 1966. It's a tradition we're proud to continue.

Today, Bryn Mawr Terrace serves as a Continuing Care Retirement Community (CCRC), offering a range of services – including [short-term rehabilitation](#), [traditional nursing care](#), [independent living](#), [personal care](#), [memory care](#), [restorative care](#) and [respite care](#) – all in a setting that is warm, welcoming and nurturing. **For more information on Bryn Mawr Terrace and our variety of**



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**needs-based lifestyle services, please call us at (610) 525-8300 or [contact us online](#).**

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