



## Seniors Taking Charge of Your Health!

### Lesson 8: Arthritis – Healthy Eating and Keeping Active Can Help

#### Getting Ready

1. Review the lesson plan and read the educator resources before each session.
2. Prepare to do chair exercises. Choose Module E with bands (found elsewhere in this document) or Tufts/CDC Growing Stronger, Part II (a separate booklet or online at: [http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/growing\\_stronger/growing\\_stronger.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/dnpa/physical/growing_stronger/growing_stronger.pdf)).
3. Make copies of chair exercise guide for participants to take home (if not done so already).
4. Copy and staple the handouts that best meet the needs of your audience (one set for each participant).
5. Gather supplies needed for lesson, recipe, and activities.

#### General Supplies

1. Handouts for participants.
2. Pens or pencils for participants to write on the handouts.
3. Exercise bands for chair exercises. Optional: step counters to replace those that are lost or broken.
4. Supplies for “Bingo for Better Health” are bingo cards for all participants (found elsewhere in the manual), large dry beans for bingo pieces, and prizes such as magnifying glasses, measuring cups, healthy snacks, bottled water, spice blends, packets of artificial sweetener, low-calorie and shelf-stable milk products, canned or fresh fruits and vegetables, night lights, and lotion or hand cream.

#### Supplies When Preparing a Recipe for Participants (Strongly Recommended)

1. Ingredients to prepare the recipe provided or another healthy recipe.
2. Supplies for tasting recipe, such as plates, forks or spoons, and napkins.

#### Beginning the Session

1. Introduce yourself by name and the organization that you represent. Take attendance.
2. Summarize the lesson by going over the objectives. Let the group know that the session will be informal and that questions can be asked at any time.

#### Objectives for Participants

1. Know the definition of arthritis
2. Learn the importance and benefits of managing arthritis through activity and diet.
3. Learn how to eat right to reduce symptoms of arthritis.
4. Do chair exercises, complete physical activity charts, and set new physical activity goals.

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## Educator Resources

Before presenting the lesson, read these resources that were used to prepare this lesson:

- National Institute on Aging, Age Page, Arthritis Advice, <http://www.niapublications.org/agepages/arthritis.asp>.
- National Institute on Aging, Age Page, Arthritis Advice, <http://www.niapublications.org/agepages/arthritis.asp>.
- Live Well Age Well, Foods and Dietary Supplements for Healthy Aging, <http://livewellagewell.info/downloads/06WebsiteFoodsSupplementsJan16.pdf>.
- Live Well Age Well, Information on Fish and Fish Oils, [http://livewellagewell.info/downloads/vitsandmineralsfishJan162006\\_fish.pdf](http://livewellagewell.info/downloads/vitsandmineralsfishJan162006_fish.pdf).
- Live Well Age Well, Guide to Common Nutrient Supplements, <http://livewellagewell.info/downloads/06DietarySupplementsLessonPlanNOAHnetJan16maj.pdf>
- The Center for Disease Control's Arthritis Intervention Program, <http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/intervention/index.htm>.
- <http://www.cdc.gov/nccdphp/publications/AAG/pdf/arthritis.pdf>.
- The Center for Disease Control's Arthritis Intervention Program, <http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis/intervention/index.htm>.
- CDC's National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion, <http://www.cdc.gov/arthritis>.
- American College of Rheumatology, <http://www.rheumatology.org>.

Glucosamine, with or without chondroitin has been recommended for osteoarthritis. Evidence for possible benefits is mixed. Further information concerning arthritis and supplements is at:

- Arthritis Foundation, <http://ww2.arthritis.org/conditions/JointHealth/default.asp>.
- Towheed, T.E., Maxwell, L., Anastassiades, T.P., Shea, B., Houpt, J., Robinson, V., Hochberg, M.C., Wells, G. Glucosamine therapy for treating osteoarthritis. Cochrane Database of Systematic Reviews, 2001, Issue 1. Art. No.: CD002946. DOI: 10.1002/14651858.CD002946.pub2, <http://www.cochrane.org/reviews/en/ab002946.html>.

## Script

*Give participants their handouts.*

*Remember to take attendance.*

## Introduction

It's great to see you today! Today we will talk about managing arthritis, as well as healthy eating and physical activity. Thinking back over our past meetings, does anyone remember how many minutes of moderate physical activity should we do each day? *Wait for responses.* Right! Aim for 30 minutes of moderate physical activity. How many servings of fruits and vegetables should we eat each day? *Wait for responses.* Yes! Aim for 7 to 10 servings daily. What are some easy-to-fix whole grain foods we can eat everyday? *Wait for responses.* Good ideas! A whole grain cereal for breakfast and a sandwich with two slices of whole grain bread provides the recommended three servings daily. How many servings of milk products do we need each day? *Wait for responses.* Right! Three servings of low-fat milk products daily are recommended. Remember to choose low-salt and low-fat versions of your favorite foods. Lastly, to prevent foodborne illness and the spread of the flu, colds and other germs – remember to wash your hands for how long? Yes! 20 seconds after before preparing food and after using the bathroom.

Let's review our handout called "*Seniors Taking Charge of Your Health!*" and discuss what you eat to stay healthy. *Wait for responses.* What do you do to stay physically and mentally active? *Wait for responses.* What are some things that help you stay positive and cheer you up? *Wait for responses.* Good! What are some of the important check-ups we need? Yes! You should check your feet daily, which is very important for people with diabetes. Ask your doctor how often you should have your blood pressure, blood cholesterol, blood sugar, and body weight checked. You may need these checked more often if you have high blood pressure, high blood cholesterol, or diabetes. Regular vision and hearing check-ups are also important. Ask your doctor or pharmacist to review your medications to help avoid medication problems. Another important part of good health is washing your hands for at least 20 seconds before preparing foods and after using the bathroom. Proper hand washing helps decrease the risk of foodborne illness, colds, and the flu, especially in the winter season.

## Arthritis

About half of people 65 and older have arthritis. Arthritis causes painful and stiff joints. For older people arthritis is usually a chronic problem, meaning it will last a long time. There are several types of arthritis, which have different symptoms and treatments. Some types of arthritis cause swelling, warmth and redness in your joints. Sometimes the pain and swelling are intense and last a short time, while others have fewer symptoms but slowly damage the joints over time. Older people most often have osteoarthritis, rheumatoid arthritis, or gout.

## Common Kinds of Arthritis

**Osteoarthritis (OA)** is the most common type of arthritis in older people. It starts when the cartilage padding in the joints starts to wear away. Eventually the bones in the joints can rub against each other. Osteoarthritis usually attacks the hands, neck, lower back, or large weight-bearing joints of your body, such as knees and hips.

The symptoms range from stiffness and mild pain that comes and goes with activities such as walking, bending, or stooping. Some people have severe joint pain that disturbs rest and sleep. Osteoarthritis can cause joints to become very stiff when people are still for a while, such as after riding in a car. But moving the joint helps the stiffness go away. Overtime, osteoarthritis can cause more problems with the joints and sometimes leads to disability when the back, knees or hips are affected. Some causes of osteoarthritis are just getting older, a family tendency, being overweight or obese, and some injuries or overuse of the joints.

**Rheumatoid Arthritis (RA)** is an *autoimmune* disease, meaning that your body is attacking itself. The lining of the joints is injured and becomes inflamed, with symptoms such as pain, swelling, and stiffness that lasts for hours. Rheumatoid arthritis can cause a general feeling of illness, along with being tired or having a fever. Joints in the fingers, wrists, shoulders, elbows, hips, knees, ankles, feet, and neck can be affected. Rheumatoid arthritis can also injure other parts of the body, such as the heart, muscles, blood vessels, nervous system, and eyes.

**Gout** is one of the most painful forms of arthritis. Crystals of a body chemical called “uric acid” form in the connective tissue and/or joint spaces. This causes swelling, redness, heat, pain, and stiffness. Gout attacks often follow eating foods such as shellfish, liver, dried beans, peas, anchovies, or gravy. Things that make gout worse are: using alcohol, being overweight, and taking certain medications, such as some blood pressure medicines. Having gout in the big toe is common, and gout can also affect the ankle, elbow, knee, wrist, hand, or other toes. Swelling makes the area red or purple and very tender.

### Know the Warning Signs, Get Checked, and Get Help!

Let’s carefully review the handout called “*Arthritis: Know the Warning Signs, Get Checked, and Get Help!*” Carefully review the handout with the participants using the added details below. Do see your doctor if you have any of the symptoms listed for two weeks or longer. Your doctor will ask you about your symptoms and do a physical exam, and may do other tests such as x-rays before suggesting a plan for treatment.

### Treatments For Arthritis

Although each kind of arthritis is handled a bit differently, they share some common treatments such as rest, exercise, eating a healthy, well-balanced diet, and learning the right way to use and protect the joints are helpful for all types of arthritis. Wearing right shoes and using a cane helps with pain in the feet, knees, and hips when walking. There are various gadgets to help open jars and bottles, or to turn door knobs more easily.

Be sure to ask and work with your doctor to get the medicines that will work best for you and your arthritis pain. Several common types are listed on the handout. Carefully read the package inserts of both prescription and non-prescription medicines so that you can report any side-effects to your doctor.

At the bottom of this handout, you'll see that healthy eating is about the same for people with arthritis as for everyone else. Aim to eat 7 to 10 servings of fruits and vegetables daily, three servings of whole grains, three servings of low-fat milk products, and lean protein from meat poultry, or fish. Fish a few times a week will provide an important nutrient called "n-3 fats" or "omega-3 fats." These are important for everyone for healthy functioning of the brain, heart, and perhaps the joints, too. So include some fish in your diet for overall good health.

Ask your doctor if you should take any supplements for your joint health. The research is not yet clear on the benefits of fish oil supplements, glucosamine, or chondroitin sulphate for joint health. So work closely with your doctor to see if any of these might help you and be sure to tell your doctor of any side-effects you may experience from these supplements. If you do decide to buy supplements, then be sure to purchase them from a local pharmacy or grocery store that you trust. Avoid purchasing supplements from people you don't know or over the internet.

The next handout is called "*Arthritis: Treatments and Physical Activity.*" It has suggestions for treatments for the three most common types of arthritis in older people. *Carefully review this handout with the participants.* Remember that being physically active everyday is helpful for people with arthritis. Ask your doctor what is best for you. Many people find that walking and swimming is helpful. The chair exercises we improve range-of-motion to help your joints work better and strengthening to improve our muscle strength to protect our joints. Aerobic and endurance exercises are good for our overall health, help prevent weight gain that can make arthritis worse, and may help lessen joint swelling. Some other tips are shown at the bottom of the handout for people with arthritis. *Carefully review these tips with the participants.*

Because arthritis affects so many older people, there are a lot of scams for arthritis. So let's next review the handout called "*Avoid Awful Arthritis Rip-Offs.*" *Carefully review the handout with participants and ask them what kinds of scams and rip-offs they have heard of lately.*

Because healthy eating is such an important part of overall health, we'll next review a menu and recipe that illustrate a well-balanced meal plan.

## **Menu and Recipe**

Let's look at our handout called "*Sample Menu #8.*" This menu has about 1,800 calories and illustrates healthy eating. Remember to follow any specific dietary restrictions or recommendations from your physician, registered dietitian, pharmacist, or other health care professional. Our menu shows us how to get at least seven servings of a variety of fruits and vegetables daily. Do you see any of your favorite fruits and vegetables on today's menu? *Wait for responses.* Great! How about whole grain foods? Can you pick out the whole grains in today's sample menu? *Help participants pick out which parts of the meals and snacks include whole grains, such as whole grain bread, and remind participants to aim for at least three*

*servings daily.* Low-fat milk products also are important. Milk is our best source of calcium and vitamin D, which are nutrients that work to keep our bones strong. Low-fat milk, yogurt, and reduced- or low-fat cheeses all add to our goal of three milk products daily. Smoothies and cottage cheese on crackers, and yogurt are healthy choices from the milk group. To increase your intake of omega-3 fats, which might be beneficial for arthritis, you can substitute a fish such as salmon for the chicken in this menu.

Yogurt also makes a great accompaniment to our healthy recipe listed in the breakfast menu. This peach crumble is easy to make and satisfies a sweet tooth. Serve it warm with yogurt and you've got a fruit and low-fat milk serving to start your day off right. *If a recipe is provided for participants to try, then be sure to tell participants what is in the recipe, in case anyone is allergic to any of the ingredients.*

Along with healthy eating, we also discussed how physical activity can help to keep joints feeling good, especially for those with arthritis.

### **Be Physically Active Everyday!**

Would anyone like to share the physical activities they did this past week? *Invite participants to share.* Great! Has anyone reached the goal of at least 30 minutes daily of moderate activity? *Wait for responses.* Wow! You should be proud of yourself. Make it a habit to write down your minutes of activity on your calendar, as this can help to keep you on track.

Is everybody ready for our chair exercises today? Remember that in previous sessions we used bands to help challenge our muscles. We'll be using the bands again today to help build strength. We'll also do some stretching exercises for flexibility. I hope you do strengthening and stretching exercises on your own, too. *Begin the exercise session with a five to ten minute warm-up. Then, begin Exercise Module E (bands) or Tufts/CDC Growing Stronger, Part II.*

**NOTE:** *For groups using step counters: Ask participants if they have added more steps to their daily routine. Ask participants to pull out their Physical Activity Charts, and to remember to record their step counts for each day on the sheet.*

### **Activity: "Bingo for Better Health"**

*Gather the group together to play "Bingo for Better Health." The bingo cards are printed at the end of all of these lessons. Give participants large dry beans for bingo pieces and bingo cards that have a series of nutrition and health-related illustrations in each bingo square. Play this game as normal bingo is played. Shuffle the stack of large bingo pieces, select one to call out to participants, and show the bingo piece to participants. The first participant to accurately declare bingo wins. Ideas for prizes include magnifying glasses to read food and medicine labels, measuring cups, healthy snacks, bottled water, spice blends, small packets of artificial sweetener, low-calorie pudding mix, shelf-stable milk or soy products (e.g., low-calorie milk powder, low-calorie cocoa packet, 8-ounce boxes of milk), canned or fresh fruits and vegetables, lights (e.g., night light, flashlight, key-chain light, other battery-powered lights), and small bottles of lotion or hand cream.*

## Seniors Taking Charge of Your Health! (Lesson 8)

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### Eat Healthy

What are some foods you eat to help you stay healthy?



Remember that healthy eating is important for people with arthritis.

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### Be Active

What are some activities you do to stay physically and mentally active?



Today we will talk about how being physically active helps relieve some symptoms of arthritis and protects the joints.

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### Be Positive

What are some things that cheer you up and help you enjoy life?



Today we will talk about the importance of a good mental outlook, even for those with arthritis.

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### Get Checked

What are some check-ups we need?



Remember to ask your doctor about getting checked for the type of arthritis you have and the best treatments for you.

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# **Arthritis: Know the Warning Signs, Get Checked, and Get Help!**

## **Warning Signs**

If any of these symptoms lasts longer than 2 weeks, then get checked by your regular doctor or a rheumatologist (a doctor that specializes in joint problems). If you have a fever, feel physically ill, suddenly have a swollen joint, or have problems using your joint, see your doctor sooner.



- Lasting joint pain
- Joint swelling
- Joint stiffness
- Tenderness or pain when touching a joint
- Problems using or moving a joint normally
- Warmth and redness in a joint

## **Help for Most Types of Arthritis**

- Rest
- Exercise
- Eating a healthy, well-balanced diet
- Wear the right shoes
- A cane helps with pain in the feet, knees, and hips when walking
- Gadgets to help open jars and bottles, or to turn door knobs
- Medications – ask your doctor what is right for you:
  - Over-the-counter (these can have side-effects, too)
    - Acetaminophen
    - Nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS)
      - Ibuprofen or Naproxen
  - Other medications



## **Healthy Eating**

- Eat vegetables, fruit, whole grains, low-fat dairy, lean meats, poultry, fish
- Eat some foods with n-3 or omega-3 healthy fats:
  - Fish, such as salmon
  - Nuts, especially walnuts
- Ask your doctor about taking omega-3 supplements (1 to 3 grams daily), glucosamine, or chondroitin sulphate. Their benefits are not yet clear.

National Institute on Aging, Age Page, Arthritis Advice, <http://www.niapublications.org/agepages/arthritis.asp>.

## Arthritis: Treatments and Physical Activity

### **Osteoarthritis**

- Medicine, rest, and exercise
- Keep weight down and ask your doctor if you should lose weight
- Severe pain may be treated with shots in the joint
- Surgery to repair or replace damaged joints

### **Rheumatoid Arthritis**

- Treatment can slow or stop damage
- Acetaminophen, ibuprofen or naproxen
- Corticosteroids, such as prednisone
- DMARDs: disease-modifying antirheumatic drugs
- Other medications



### **Gout**

- Ask your doctor to help you
  - Find out why you had an attack
  - How to prevent future attacks
- NSAIDS or corticosteroids (prednisone)
- Other medicines for severe attacks



### **Be Physically Active Everyday!**

- Walking and swimming are very good
- Helps joints to move, lessens pain, and strengthens muscles around joints
- Three types helpful for arthritis:
  1. Range-of-motion: such as dancing, relieves stiffness, improves flexibility
  2. Strengthening: such as weight training, improves strength to protect joints
  3. Aerobic or endurance exercises: such as bicycling, improves overall health, helps prevent weight gain, and may lessen swelling in some joints

### **Other Helpful Tips**

- Apply heat or cold, soak in a warm bath, or swim in a heated pool
- Surgery when joint damage becomes disabling or when other treatments do not help with pain. Hip or knee replacement is common.

National Institute on Aging, Age Page, Arthritis Advice, <http://www.niapublications.org/agepages/arthritis.asp>.

## Avoid Awful Arthritis Rip-Offs

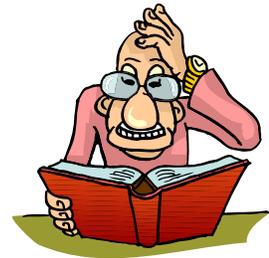
### Protect yourself from health scams and rip-offs:

- Question what you see or hear in ads or internet
- Newspapers, magazines, radio, and TV stations do not always check to make sure the claims in their ads are true
- Find out about a product before you buy it
- Don't let a sales person force you into a snap decision. Ask your doctor first.



### It is probably a rip-off if there is a:

- Promise a quick or painless cure
- Claim to be from a special, secret, or ancient formula — often only available by mail or from one sponsor
- Testimonials or undocumented case histories from satisfied patients
- Claim to be effective for a wide range of ailments
- Claim to cure a major disease, such as arthritis or cancer
- “Free” gift or a larger amount of the product as a “special promotion”
- Requirement for advance payment
- Claim of limited amounts of the product – so buy it now



### How can you tell that a remedy may actually work for you?

- The remedy claims that a treatment, such as a lotion or cream, works for all types of arthritis and many other diseases
- Scientific support comes from only one research study
- The label has no directions for use or warnings about side-effects

Adapted from:

National Institute on Aging, Age Page, Health Quackery: Spotting Health Scams,  
<http://www.niapublications.org/agepages/healthqy.asp>.

National Institute on Aging, Age Page, Arthritis Advice, <http://www.niapublications.org/agepages/arthritis.asp>.

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## Sample Menu #8



### **Breakfast**

Peach crumble (recipe provided)  
Peach yogurt, low-fat and low-calorie,  $\frac{3}{4}$  cup

### **Snack**

Peanut butter and jelly sandwich,  $\frac{1}{2}$  sandwich, made with 1 slice whole wheat bread, 1 tablespoon peanut butter, and 1 teaspoon fruit preserves

### **Lunch**

Turkey and spinach salad, made with 2 cups spinach or romaine lettuce, 2 ounces cubed skinless turkey breast,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup diced tomatoes,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup diced tangerine, 2 tablespoons reduced-fat salad dressing  
Kidney beans, canned, rinsed and drained, heated,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup  
Pita chips, made with whole wheat pita bread\* ( $\frac{1}{2}$  a 6 inch diameter), drizzled with 1 teaspoon canola oil, toasted and cut into wedges (or have 5 whole wheat crackers)

### **Snack**

Cantaloupe, cubed,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup  
Milk, 1%, 1 cup

### **Evening meal**

Chicken thigh or breast, skinless, roasted with salt-free seasoning, 3 ounces  
Peas, frozen, boiled,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup  
Butternut squash, frozen, cubed, roasted or microwaved,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup, with 1 teaspoon soft margarine, sprinkled with cinnamon to taste  
Cornbread, 1 small square

### **Snack**

Granola bar, low-fat, 1 small  
Milk, 1%, 1 cup

\*Pita bread is a round and flat bread commonly sold about 6 loaves per package at most grocery stores in the bakery department. The cost is about \$1 to \$2 per package. \*\*Drink plenty of fluids each day! Water, tea, coffee, small amounts of juice, and other liquids all can help to keep you hydrated.

## Peach Crumble

Serves 2

### Ingredients:

- 1 cup peach chunks, canned in water, drained\*
- ¼ cup uncooked oats (old-fashioned or quick-cooking)
- 2 tablespoons all-purpose or whole wheat flour
- 2 tablespoons brown sugar
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon
- 2 tablespoons chopped pecans or walnuts
- 1½ tablespoons soft tub margarine (cold)



\*You can also use frozen, thawed peaches, or fresh if in season.

### Directions:

1. Preheat oven to 375°F. Place peach chunks into a small baking dish (about 15-ounce size).
2. In a small bowl, mix together the oats, flour, brown sugar, cinnamon, and nuts.
3. Add the margarine to the oat mixture, and work it in with your fingertips until the mixture has a crumbly texture.
4. Sprinkle the oat mixture evenly over the peaches; place the dish into the oven.
5. Bake for about 15 minutes, or until the top is fairly crisp; let sit for 5 minutes before serving.



#### Try this!

Use different fruits for this recipe, such as thawed, frozen blueberries, fresh or canned pears, or thinly sliced apples.

#### Estimated Nutrition Facts per serving:

**260** calories  
**11 g** total fat  
**2 g** saturated fat  
**40 g** carbohydrate  
**4 g** protein  
**3 g** fiber

## Nutrient Analyses of Sample Menus

| Day/<br>Nutrient | Calories    | Total Fat<br>(g) | Sat. Fat<br>(g) | Total<br>Carb. (g) | Protein<br>(g) | Fiber (g) |
|------------------|-------------|------------------|-----------------|--------------------|----------------|-----------|
| Sample 1         | 1805        | 52               | 15              | 257                | 89             | 28        |
| Sample 2         | 1751        | 56               | 17              | 228                | 95             | 34        |
| Sample 3         | 1774        | 50               | 12              | 240                | 96             | 27        |
| Sample 4         | 1831        | 60               | 15              | 240                | 93             | 34        |
| Sample 5         | 1725        | 52               | 13              | 228                | 101            | 26        |
| Sample 6         | 1773        | 58               | 15              | 234                | 88             | 27        |
| Sample 7         | 1744        | 61               | 18              | 221                | 94             | 32        |
| <b>Sample 8</b>  | <b>1763</b> | <b>53</b>        | <b>13</b>       | <b>235</b>         | <b>99</b>      | <b>30</b> |
| Sample 9         | 1757        | 51               | 17              | 232                | 101            | 30        |
| Sample 10        | 1768        | 56               | 15              | 227                | 101            | 26        |
| Sample 11        | 1810        | 68               | 19              | 223                | 92             | 27        |
| Sample 12        | 1750        | 50               | 14              | 242                | 100            | 31        |
| Average          | 1771        | 56               | 15              | 235                | 96             | 29        |



Most of the sample menus provide nutrients in the ranges of:

- 1750 to 1850 calories
- 25% to 35% of total calories from fat
- 7% to 10% of total calories from saturated fat
- 50% to 60% of total calories from carbohydrate
- 20% to 25% of total calories from protein
- 25 to 35 grams of fiber

Nutrient analysis estimates were completed using Diet Analysis Plus, Version 6.1, from ESHA Research, 2004. Nutrient values for individual foods can vary depending on brand, type of processing, method of preparation, and other factors. Be sure to read the Nutrition Facts panel of food labels if you'd like to know exactly how much of specific nutrients are in the foods you buy.