OVER 60 HEALTH

60+ Daily Health Checklist

Eat well. Move well.
Honest, sourced tips.

GENERAL EDUCATION, NOT MEDICAL ADVICE

This checklist is general education, not medical advice. Please talk with your doctor before changing your diet or exercise.
If something hurts, stop. If you have kidney disease, ask your doctor before adding protein.

1. Protein

NIA calls protein the body's building blocks, and says to get enough throughout the day. Add seafood, dairy or fortified soy, plus beans, peas and lentils. An expert group (PROT-AGE) says people over 65 often need about 1.0 to 1.2 grams per kilogram of body weight per day — more than the standard adult RDA of 0.8. Try to include some at breakfast, not only at dinner. Severe kidney disease (and not on dialysis): you may need to limit protein — ask your doctor first.

2. Fiber

NIA notes that protein from plants — beans, peas, lentils, and other plant foods — tends to come with fiber, and is lower in saturated fat, with no cholesterol. Build meals around fruits, vegetables, beans and whole grains from NIA's food groups.

3. Balance

CDC says adults 65 and older need balance activities every week, along with aerobic and strength work. NIA suggests simple practice: stand on one foot while holding a sturdy chair, and walk heel to toe. Start with a few seconds, keep support within reach, and build up slowly.

4. Strength

CDC recommends muscle-strengthening activity at least 2 days a week. NIA says beginners can start with no weights, try chair stands and wall push-ups, breathe out on the effort (don't hold your breath), and stop if it hurts. One set of 8 to 12 repetitions can be effective. Avoid working the same muscle group two days in a row.

5. Walking

CDC says adults 65 and older need at least 150 minutes a week of moderate aerobic activity, such as brisk walking (or 75 minutes vigorous). Some physical activity is better than none at all. If you're just starting, a shorter walk still counts — then build up.

6. Sleep

NIA says older adults need about the same amount of sleep as other adults: 7 to 9 hours a night. Tips from the same page: go to sleep and get up at the same time each day, even on weekends; have a bedtime routine (reading, soothing music, or a warm bath); and avoid caffeine late in the day (coffee, tea, chocolate, soda). If you're always sleepy, or it's hard to get enough sleep at night, talk with a doctor.

7. Fall safety at home

NIA says many falls happen at home. Room-by-room advice includes handrails on both sides of any stairs (and holding them), good lighting with switches at the top and bottom, no throw rugs or small area rugs, clear floors, grab bars near the toilet and inside and outside the tub and shower, nonskid mats, night lights and a switch close to the bed, and nonskid, rubber-soled, low-heeled shoes instead of socks or smooth-soled slippers.

SOURCES (opened for Over 60 Health videos; no invented numbers)

NIA, Know Your Food Groups — nia.nih.gov/health/healthy-eating-nutrition-and-diet/healthy-eating-you-age-know-your-food-groups
NIA, Healthy Meal Planning: Tips for Older Adults — nia.nih.gov/health/healthy-eating-nutrition-and-diet/healthy-meal-planning-tips-older-adults
PROT-AGE Study Group (Bauer et al.), JAMDA 2013 — pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/23867520/
CDC, Older Adult Activity: An Overview — cdc.gov/physical-activity-basics/guidelines/older-adults.html
NIA, Workout to Go and Everyday Guide (exercise steps); NIA, Preventing Falls at Home: Room by Room — nia.nih.gov/health/falls-and-falls-prevention/preventing-falls-home-room-room
NIA, Sleep and Older Adults — nia.nih.gov/health/sleep/sleep-and-older-adults