



Health NEWS & NOTES

Tips For Flavorful Eating In Later Years

(NAPS)—There's encouraging news for older people whose senses of taste and smell have diminished. It's now possible to counteract some of these losses through the creative use of flavorful food ingredients.

In fact, according to some experts, maximizing food flavor calls for more imagination than culinary skill. Here are some ways to help make meals more appetizing:

1. Make sure that the food is attractively arranged and garnished.

2. Use fresh, quality ingredients whenever possible.

3. Augment your food's flavor with a variety of herbs, spices and other flavor-enhancement techniques.

4. Vary the shapes, textures and temperature of food. This way the taste buds can detect the variety.

5. Take time to savor your food. Smell it before you taste it, and chew thoroughly before swallowing.

Over time, the senses of taste and smell can decrease, either naturally, or as a result of medical treatments, conditions or medications. These losses can cause poor appetite, weight loss—even malnourishment.

Medical treatments and medications that can affect taste and smell include anti-depressants, anticonvulsants, antihistamines, anti-inflammatories, chemotherapy, cardiac medications and muscle relaxants. Conditions such as

Helpful Flavor Enhancing Ingredients

- **Strongly flavored foods.** Look for foods such as garlic, onions, citrus fruits and flavored vinegars, if tolerated.

- **Monosodium glutamate.** Use flavor enhancers such as MSG to heighten savory foods or reduce perceived bitterness or acidity. MSG's effectiveness is not dependent on the ability to smell; and because it is lower in sodium than table salt (600mg. vs. 2,000mg.), it can boost the flavor of sodium-restricted diets.

- **Herbs, spices.** Double the amount of herbs and spices added to recipes, but within reason. Some spicy seasonings, such as black or red pepper, shouldn't be doubled automatically. Also, dry rubs and spice/herb combinations on meat and poultry add flavor without fat.

- **Concentrated fruit sauces, jams.** Use them, as well as concentrated flavors and extracts, on meat or vegetable dishes to stimulate taste buds.

- **Add small amounts of fat.** Creamy dressing, cheese sauce, bacon bits and other fats can be used to soften sharp-tasting foods.



Alzheimer's disease, epilepsy, bronchial asthma and diabetes mellitus can also influence one's ability to taste and smell.

Before changing or adjusting your diet or that of a loved one, check with your doctor.