Healthy Eating

Eating healthily and having an active lifestyle can support healthy ageing.

Enjoy a variety of foods from each food group to help reduce the risk of developing diseases such as high blood pressure, diabetes, and heart disease.

**Dietary Fibre – for a healthy gut**
- Increase fruit and vegetable intake
- Reduce salt intake by seasoning foods with herbs and citrus such as lemon juice
- Drink plenty of water throughout the day to help stay hydrated and aid in the digestion of food and absorption of nutrients

**Protein – for healthy muscles**
To get enough protein throughout the day and to maintain muscle – lean meats, seafood, dairy, or fortified soy products, beans, peas, and lentils

**Minerals and vitamins are important in the later years of life:**
- **Calcium** – for bone health and reduced fracture risk
  - Osteoporosis is a major health issue, particularly among women
  - Good sources of calcium are lower-fat dairy products such as milk, cheese and yoghurt
  - Calcium is also found in tinned fish with bones, such as salmon and sardines
  - Other sources of calcium include green leafy vegetables (such as broccoli and cabbage), soya beans and tofu

- **Vitamin D** – for bone, tooth and muscle health
  - Vitamin D, is mainly from sunlight, but certain foods such as Vitamin D supplements. It is essential for absorbing Calcium. Vitamin D may also help maintain immunity
  - **Vitamin B12** – mood and brain health
  - Try foods fortified with vitamin B12, such as some cereals, or talk to your doctor about taking a B12 supplement
  - **Folic acid** – general and brain health
  - Good sources of folic acid include green vegetables, wholegrain foods and fortified breakfast cereals

**Stay Well Hydrated**
We need plenty of fluid to maintain health and to help prevent constipation.
- Aim to drink about 6-8 glasses of water, or other fluids, every day to stop you getting dehydrated (or more in warm weather)

**Cutting down**
Cutting down on salt and added sugars – for heart health and maintaining healthy weight
- Check food labels to choose items with less salt (sodium) and added sugars

**Among adults aged 50 and older in Ireland:**
- 2 in 3 adults consume 1 or more daily servings of food and drinks high in fat, salt and sugar
- 1 in 8 adults are deficient or low in Vitamin D
- 1 in 4 adults do not get their 5-a-day of fruit and vegetables
- 9 in 10 adults do not have recommended 3 servings of dairy (milk, yoghurt and cheese)
- 1 in 7 adults are deficient or low in folate (folic acid)