

Eggs and Healthy Ageing



Good nutrition becomes increasingly important with age. Eating well helps maintain muscle strength, supports memory and thinking, protects bones, and keeps the immune system strong – all essential for preserving independence and quality of life.

However, many older adults may find it hard to meet their nutrient needs due to changes in appetite, taste and smell, or difficulty chewing as they age.

Eggs are a nutrient-dense, affordable and versatile food that can help older Australians meet their nutritional needs every day.



Why eggs support healthy ageing

Eggs provide **17 different vitamins and nutrients**, including vitamin D, vitamin B12, iodine, selenium, choline, and protein, that all play a role in supporting healthy ageing.



Protein for strength and mobility

As we age, our bodies become less efficient at using protein to build and maintain muscle.¹ This means older adults need more protein each day.

Eating enough protein is linked with better muscle mass, strength and physical function — and may help slow age-related muscle loss.^{1,2}

Eggs contain high-quality protein with all 9 essential amino acids, making them an excellent choice.

Consuming adequate protein at each meal (approximately 25–30 g protein per meal) may help maximise muscle protein synthesis in older adults.³ Eggs contribute to achieving this target as they can be included in any meal across the course of the day or enjoyed as a snack.

Breakfast is often the lowest protein meal of the day for older adults.⁴ Eating eggs at this time of the day can help improve total daily protein intake, supporting bone and muscle strength and maintenance.

References

- 1 Bauer J, T et al. (2013). J Am Med Dir Assoc. 14(8): 542–559.
- 2 Deutz NEP, et al. (2014). Clin Nutr, 33(6): 929–936.
- 3 Moore DR, et al. (2015). J Nutr, 145(6): 1174–1181.
- 4 Souza LBD, et al. Geriatr Gerontol Aging. 2022;16:e0220001.





Choline for brain health

Choline helps your body make acetylcholine, a neurotransmitter that supports memory and overall brain function. Eggs are one of the best food sources of choline, making them an easy way to help meet your daily needs.⁵



Vitamin D for muscle function and bone health

Vitamin D supports bone health, muscle function and helps the body absorb calcium. Many older adults have low vitamin D levels, which can increase the risk of falls and fractures. Eggs are one of the few foods that naturally contain vitamin D. One serve of two (60g) eggs provides⁷:

- ▶ **82% of the RDI for adults aged 51 to 70**
- ▶ **55% of the RDI for adults aged 70 and above**



Lutein and zeaxanthin for eye health

Eggs contain lutein and zeaxanthin – antioxidants that support long term eye health. These nutrients accumulate in the retina and protect against oxidative damage. Higher intakes of these carotenoids have been linked to a lower risk of age-related macular degeneration and are thought to support long-term eye health.⁸



Practical benefits of eggs for older adults

Eggs are ideal for older adults because they are:

- ✓ Nutrient-dense, providing 17 different vitamins and nutrients
- ✓ Quick and simple to cook
- ✓ Soft and easy to chew

References

5 Ylilauri MPT, et al. (2019). AJCN, 110(6): 1416–1423.

6 Neale RE, et al. (2021). Br J Nutr. 2021 Dec 14;126(11):1682-1686.

7 NHMRC; NZ Ministry of Health. Nutrient Reference Values for Australia and New Zealand including Recommended Dietary Intakes. Canberra: NHMRC; 2006

8 Lawrenson JG, Downie LE (2019). Nutrients, 11(9): 2123.