It's long been known that diet is one of the key factors in maintaining health and well-being, especially among older individuals. Due to nutritional needs, certain limitations in meal consumption, and characteristic chronic diseases of old age, the senior diet is quite specific.

**From the text, you'll learn:**

• What **the diet of older individuals** should consist of,

• What are the key principles of healthy nutrition for seniors,

• Characteristics of diets such as gluten-free and easily digestible.

According to the World Health Organization, 50% of human health depends on a broadly understood lifestyle, including diet. Older individuals often struggle with various chronic diseases such as gastric ulcer disease, hypertension, diabetes, and circulatory diseases. Improper diet is a risk factor for the development of many of these conditions, making proper nutrition an important element of prevention and treatment.

It's also worth noting that older individuals sometimes have dental deficiencies, leading to difficulties in chewing and swallowing. This often results in seniors eating alone, lacking the strength to prepare appetizing meals, and having a poorly varied diet, all of which can negatively impact their health.

Basic principles of senior nutrition.

For maintaining health and well-being, every senior should adhere to the basic principles of a balanced diet.

• Consuming 4-5 small meals throughout the day to prevent hunger attacks without overburdening the digestive system.

• Meals should be prepared from fresh products from trusted suppliers, with at least one meal being warm.

• Drinking at least two liters of fluids per day, preferably mineral water. During hot weather, this can be increased to three liters per day.

• The daily diet should include as many fruits and vegetables as possible, as they are a source of fiber, vitamins, and minerals. They can be steamed, mashed, pureed, or juiced.

• The best source of carbohydrates is primarily whole-grain products such as bread, cereals, and pasta.

• Calcium is an important component of the senior diet necessary for healthy bones, which can be obtained from milk, natural yogurts, and kefir.

• Limiting salt intake is important as it negatively affects blood pressure. It's better to season dishes with herbs and dried vegetables.

• Limiting the consumption of fatty meats, processed meats, and animal fats, as they can increase bad cholesterol levels.

• It's recommended to consume poultry, fish, plant oils, and olive oil as sources of valuable polyunsaturated fatty acids.

• Individuals with chewing or swallowing problems should consume semi-liquid or liquid meals.