

# Cooking for One or Two People: Eating Alone



Eating alone can be difficult for people of any age. It may not seem worth the effort to cook just for you. But there are ways to put the fun back into eating. Start with keeping your cupboards well stocked with nutritious foods that you enjoy. Studies show that when you eat with others, you tend to have an improved nutrient intake. So, sit down with some friends, family members or neighbours and enjoy their company while you dine. Treat yourself well; you deserve it!

## Make it a pleasure

- Create a pleasant place to eat. Set a table with flowers, place mat and napkin, even candles. Listen to music.
- Sometimes moving to a different location or doing something else while eating is helpful. Take your meal out on the porch, sit near a window, go to the park for a picnic, watch TV or read a book.
- Enjoy a dinner out in a restaurant occasionally. Ask for a “doggie bag” to take leftovers home.
- Want a break from cooking? Try a no-cook meal, ready-made meals or other convenience foods.
- Consider taking Meals on Wheels a few times a week or more.

## Find companions

- Share a potluck dinner with a friend, or form a regular lunch group.
- Start an eating club, such as a SOUPer Supper Club: The host makes soup and others bring bread, salad or fruit.
- Join a collective kitchen or share cooking with friends. Find a place where a few of you can meet to plan, shop and prepare several meals together. Take those meals home, freeze them and pull them out when you don’t feel like shopping or cooking.
- Ask other seniors who are alone for ideas and suggestions, and share yours.
- Exchange recipes.
- Teach your grandchildren how to cook or bake.
- Check your local senior or community centres; many serve weekly meals.
- Beyond the nutritional benefits of eating with others, starting a super club or joining an eating group can also help you meet new people and forge new friendships. If you have lost your appetite for more than a day or two, talk with your doctor.

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