

WHAT'S COOKIN', GOOD LOOKIN'?

Cooking skills increase the likelihood of making better food choices, eating more vegetables and fruit and improving social interaction.

Cooking

Skills and knowledge on cooking and cuisine have an impact on food and nutritional intake.(1, 2) Cooking skills could help to keep people interested in a wider variety of foods and help improve dietary and food choices.(1, 2) Older people who have a low level of cooking skills are more likely to have healthier diets and food choices and tend to cook fewer meals at home.(3) In turn having fewer cooking skills can contribute to eating fewer vegetables and fruits and being underweight.(3) Getting involved in food preparation and cooking seems to have beneficial effects on social interaction related to meals and coping with meals.(4) Not only do cooking skills help people know how best to prepare meals but also gives them better awareness and knowledge on ready-prepared meal choices.(2) Cooking training has also been shown to show a short term increase in executive functioning in the brain.(5, 6) Executive functioning is the set of brain processes used to start and monitor tasks and include working memory, flexible thinking and self-control. (7, 8)

GOLDSTER★ **Points and Evidence Levels for this Activity**

Domain	Impact Strength	Points	Information on Evidence	Evidence Type	Evidence Level
Physical	Medium	2	In healthy older people, cooking skills have been shown to have a medium beneficial impact on eating more vegetables and fruit, cooking at home and preventing being underweight.(3)	Cross-sectional survey	Low
Cognitive	Mild	1	In healthy older people, cooking has been shown to have a mild impact on the efficiency of executive control processing in the brain. (5, 6)	Trial	Low
Emotional	Mild	1	In healthy older people, getting involved with food preparation has been shown to have a mild beneficial impact on social interaction and coping with meals.(4)	Systematic review	Low

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References

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