Tips to Boost Your Nutritional Health

As you make food choices to improve your nutrition, keep these tips in mind:

- **Stick to healthy fats.** Choose healthy fats found in seeds, nuts, avocados, fatty fish, and vegetable oils rather than saturated fats and trans fats.

- **Drink up.** Water, of course. To stay hydrated, drink a lot of water and non-caffeinated beverages and eat foods with high water content (like soups, cucumbers, grapes, and melons) unless instructed otherwise by your doctor.

- **Opt for whole grains.** These fiber- and nutrient-rich foods will help your digestion and protect your heart. Choose brown rice, whole grain cereals, and whole wheat bread instead of white bread and refined grains.

- **"Rough up" your diet.** Include a variety of high-fiber foods every day, such as raw fruits and vegetables and whole grains. These foods help cut down on constipation; provide the vitamins, minerals, fiber, and nutrients that you need for healthy aging; help maintain your weight; and reduce your risk of heart problems. If you're not sure you're getting enough fiber, talk to your doctor about supplements.

- **Pack in protein.** Power your body with lean proteins like beans, eggs, chicken and fish, lean meats, and nuts.

- **Remember that calcium is critical.** Everyone needs calcium to protect bone health, but seniors should really bone up on calcium-rich foods like low-fat dairy products. A calcium supplement, usually paired with vitamin D — its partner in bone building — can also help you get what you need.

- **Shop for B12.** As an older adult, you should also look for foods, like cereals, that are fortified with vitamin B12. Because of the body's decreased ability to absorb B12, getting more through diet and supplements will ensure that you meet your requirements.