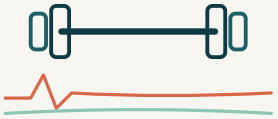
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Metabolic Health *After 50*

Muscle, protein, balance, checkups and screenings for men 50+

GUIDE 12

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Contents

01 Before you start

02 Muscle: your blood-sugar sponge

03 Protein and the Plate after 50

04 Balance and a weekly plan

05 Checkups and screenings

06 Sources

BEFORE YOU START

- This guide is educational. It is not medical advice and does not replace care from your own doctor.
- Erection problems can be an early sign of heart disease, diabetes or high blood pressure. Please book a checkup with your doctor.
- Get urgent care right away for chest pain, fainting, or an erection that lasts more than 4 hours.
- If you have heart disease, joint problems, a past fall or another condition, ask your doctor before starting new exercise.
- **Diabetes medicines:** if you take medicine for diabetes (especially insulin or a sulfonylurea), changing how you eat or move can cause **low blood sugar**. Talk with your doctor before you change your routine, and never change a dose yourself.
- Not for people with type 1 diabetes or an eating disorder unless their care team is involved. **If you have kidney disease, check protein targets with your doctor** before eating more protein.
- Never stop or change any medicine without your doctor.

CHAPTER 1

Muscle: your blood-sugar sponge

After 50, two quiet changes tend to stack up. Men slowly lose muscle with each decade unless they use it, and fat shifts toward the belly. Both matter for the After-Meal Window. Muscle is the largest place in the body where sugar from a meal is stored and used. More active muscle generally means more room to soak up that sugar, and a gentler curve.

Research shows that men of any age, including in their 70s and 80s, can build strength with regular resistance exercise. Strength work is also linked with better insulin sensitivity, steadier balance, stronger bones and easier everyday tasks — carrying groceries, climbing stairs, getting up from the floor.

STRENGTH

2 days a week

Work the main muscle groups: legs, hips, back, chest, shoulders, arms.

PACE

Walks after meals

About 10 minutes of easy walking after eating, building toward ~150 minutes a week.

BALANCE

A few minutes daily

Simple standing drills that help you stay steady on your feet.

These targets follow the US Physical Activity Guidelines for adults and older adults. Start where you are: even one short session a week is a beginning.

CHAPTER 2

Protein and the Plate after 50

Muscle needs protein to rebuild, and older muscles seem to respond best when protein is spread across the day instead of saved for one big dinner. Many men eat a light, carb-heavy breakfast and a large protein dinner. Moving some of that protein to breakfast and lunch fits the Plate rule and helps the morning curve too.

A PALM OF PROTEIN AT EVERY MEAL — EASY US GROCERY OPTIONS

MEAL	PROTEIN IDEAS	PLATE PARTNER
Breakfast	2 eggs, plain Greek yogurt, cottage cheese	Berries, spinach, one slice whole-grain toast
Lunch	Canned tuna or salmon, chicken, beans or lentils	Big salad or vegetable soup
Dinner	Fish, chicken, lean pork, tofu, turkey	Two vegetables + a fist of brown rice or potatoes
Snack	Milk, string cheese, a handful of nuts	An apple or carrot sticks

! **Kidneys first.** If you have kidney disease, or diabetes with kidney changes, your protein needs may be different. Ask your doctor or a registered dietitian for your own target.

Other nutrients deserve a mention at this age — calcium and vitamin D for bones, fiber for the gut and the curve, and enough fluids. Get them from food first. Before you take any pill or powder, talk with your doctor or pharmacist, especially if you take other medicines.

CHAPTER 3

Balance and a weekly plan

Falls are a leading cause of injury in older adults, and balance is a skill that improves with practice. Do these drills next to a kitchen counter or sturdy chair you can hold.

SIMPLE STRENGTH AND BALANCE MOVES (HOLD A SUPPORT WHENEVER NEEDED)

MOVE	HOW	START WITH
Chair sit-to-stand	Stand up from a chair and sit back down slowly, arms crossed if you can	2 sets × 8
Wall or counter push-up	Hands on the wall or counter, lower chest slowly, push back	2 sets × 8–10
Calf raises	Rise onto your toes, lower slowly	2 sets × 12
Backpack row	Lean on a counter, pull a loaded backpack up toward your hip	2 sets × 10 each side
Single-leg stand	Stand on one foot, hand lightly on the counter	3 × up to 20 seconds each side
Heel-to-toe walk	Walk in a straight line, heel touching toe	2 lengths of a hallway

A SAMPLE WEEK

DAY	PLAN	DONE
Mon	Strength moves (20 min) + after-dinner walk	☐
Tue	Walks after two meals + balance drills	☐
Wed	Longer walk (20–30 min) + balance drills	☐
Thu	Strength moves (20 min) + after-dinner walk	☐
Fri	Walks after two meals + balance drills	☐
Sat	Something you enjoy: yard work, golf on foot, a bike ride	☐
Sun	Easy walk + gentle stretching	☐

Effort check. You should be able to talk during walks and finish each set with a couple of reps "left in the tank". Stop and seek care for chest pain, faintness or unusual shortness of breath.

CHAPTER 4

Checkups and screenings

After 50, an annual visit is a good moment to look at the whole metabolic and blood-vessel picture. Which screenings you need, and how often, depends on your age, history and risk — your doctor will tailor it. Recommendations from groups such as the US Preventive Services Task Force change over time, so use this as a list of topics to raise, not a schedule.

WORKSHEET

MY SCREENINGS LIST — TOPICS TO ASK ABOUT

TOPIC	LAST DONE	NEXT DUE (PER MY DOCTOR)
Blood pressure		
Blood sugar (A1C or fasting glucose)		
Cholesterol (lipids) and heart-risk check		
Kidney function		
Colorectal cancer screening		
Prostate health — talk about the pros and cons of testing		
Eyes, hearing and feet (especially with diabetes)		
Vaccines recommended for my age		
Falls risk, mood and memory		

> **"I'm working on my metabolic health — walking after meals and doing strength work twice a week. Which screenings am I due for this year?"**

> **"I've noticed changes with erections. Could that be linked to my heart, blood vessels or blood sugar?"**

Note. Erection changes are more common with age, but they are not something you simply have to accept without a conversation. Several doctor-prescribed treatments exist, and a checkup also looks at the heart and vessels behind them.

SOURCES

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services — Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans (adults and older adults)
- National Institute on Aging — exercise, balance and falls prevention
- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) — older adult falls; STEADI
- US Preventive Services Task Force — screening recommendations for adults
- American Diabetes Association — Standards of Care (older adults; physical activity)
- Peer-reviewed reviews on resistance training, protein distribution and muscle in older adults

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