

Diet quality decreased for US seniors from 2001 to 2018

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From 2001 to 2018, there was a decrease in dietary quality among older

adults in the United States, according to a study published online March 11 in *JAMA Network Open*.

Tingxi Long, from Duke Kunshan University in China, and colleagues characterized trends in overall diet quality and key food components and [nutrients](#) using 24-hour dietary recall data from 10,837 adults aged 65 years or older in nine National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey cycles from 2001-2002 to 2017-2018.

- The researchers found that from 2001 to 2018, there was a deterioration in overall [dietary quality](#) among older adults.
- The mean primary American Heart Association (AHA) 2020 Strategic Impact Goals for diet score decreased by 7.9%, from 19.84 to 18.28.
- The mean secondary AHA score decreased by 8.4%, from 34.75 to 31.83. The mean Healthy Eating Index 2015 score decreased by 5.4%, from 47.82 to 45.25.
- Based on the primary AHA score, there was a significant increase in the proportion of [older adults](#) with a poor diet quality (50.9 to 60.9%) and a significant decrease seen in the proportion with an intermediate diet quality (48.6 to 38.7%), while the proportion with ideal diet quality remained stable and low (0.4% in both 2001-2002 and 2017-2018).

"Older adults have become the fastest-growing segment of the U.S. population; specific attention should be focused on their diets and on diet-related policy to improve their health," the authors write.

More information: Tingxi Long et al, Trends in Diet Quality Among Older US Adults From 2001 to 2018, *JAMA Network Open* (2022). [DOI: 10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.1880](https://doi.org/10.1001/jamanetworkopen.2022.1880)

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