

Nutrition News!

Edition 1: Frailty and Nutrition

March 2011



Poor nutrition and frailty in older people go hand in hand. It is not uncommon for older people to have a poor diet due to various social, psychological, financial, functional and medical reasons.

Poor nutrition in the elderly can lead to:

- Malnutrition
- Muscle loss and reduced mobility
- Fragile skin
- Pressure ulcers/ skin tears
- Osteoporosis
- Falls and fractures
- Frailty and dependence
- Poor cognition and memory
- Reduced quality of life
- Early entry into residential care

MYTH - "I don't need to eat as much as I used to."

Even though some older people are not as active, they still need the same vitamins and minerals as younger people. In fact, older people need extra protein and calcium in their diet. Exercise and a nutritious diet help to maintain strong muscles, maximise mobility and promote independence.

Weight loss is NOT a normal part of growing old. Better health is achieved with a stable weight or being slightly overweight. Low calories diets are not recommended for frail older people.

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Email your service's details and contacts to your HACC Dietitian: Caryn Kneale
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Who is at risk?

Many frail older people who receive community help are at risk of poor nutrition. Early detection and intervention is the key.

Here are some signs you should look for if you are worried about your client:

- € Clothes or jewellery are loose or oversized
- € Belt size changes
- € Loss of weight or obviously underweight
- € Fragile skin and thin hair
- € Loose or poor fitting dentures
- € Chewing or swallowing problems
- € Out of date foods or no food in the fridge
- € Eating alone most of the time
- € Memory problems
- € Unable to prepare meals

What can we do about it?

Good Nutrition

– Everyone's Business

HACC services are ideally positioned to pass on knowledge about good nutrition to clients, whether they provide domestic assistance or centre based care. What can you suggest to your clients? Find out over the page.

Are you Underweight, Losing Weight Or Not Eating Very Much?

To help prevent weight loss or to regain weight, follow these ideas:

- Eat small frequent meals and snacks.
- Eat at regular times, even if you don't feel hungry. Your appetite may not be the best guide to when you should eat.



- Have full fat milk, yoghurt, custard and cheese; not low fat.

- Make porridge (cook oats) with only milk (not water).



- Choose creamy soups, and add milk, milk powder and cream; rather than having clear soups or broth.

- Eat "high energy" snacks such as:

- pieces of cheese, or cheese and crackers
- dip and crackers, nuts, peanut butter
- dried fruit, fruit buns
- yoghurt, custard, milky puddings
- scones or pikelets (with jam & cream), crumpets, muffins
- shortbread biscuits
- Jatz, Ritz, Clix, Saos, Breton, Savoury Shapes



- Spread bread, toast and savoury biscuits thickly with margarine.

- Cook foods in oil. Use creamy sauces and dressings.



- Add margarine, butter, cheese or sour cream to vegetables.



- Add cream, ice cream, custard or yoghurt to fruit.



- Add milk powder to milk, yoghurt, custard, desserts, soups, casseroles.

- Drink nourishing fluids, like milk, coffee made on milk, smoothies, hot chocolate, fruit juice and creamy soups; rather than water, tea or coffee.



- Consider using a nutritional supplement like Sustagen made on milk, 'Resource', 'Ensure', 'Fortisip', Proform, etc.

Welcome to Nutrition News!

March 2011

Welcome to the first edition of Nutrition News! We hope that through our newsletter we can increase awareness of the importance of nutrition in HACC clients. Furthermore, we want to increase the confidence of HACC service providers in providing simple nutrition information to their clients & in implementing strategies to assist clients improve their nutrition.



We plan on covering 5 topics over the course of the year & we encourage you to make our newsletters available to your organisation & colleagues.

Nutrition at face value seems to be a fairly simple thing; yet poor nutrition can lead to poor outcomes in terms of health and quality of life, and even increases the risk of premature death. Poor nutrition is associated with issues such as increased risk of hospital admissions, pressure wounds & premature entry into residential care.

This makes identifying nutrition issues & putting some simple, effective strategies into place as soon as possible very important for our clients. Therefore each edition will give some background information & practical ideas, which you can provide clients & their carers.

We welcome any feedback regarding our Nutrition News! We also hope to do some evaluation at the end of the 5 editions to see how we can improve it in the future.

Thank you to those who have worked with us already, and we look forward to working with you in the future to ensure good nutrition for our HACC clients!

Kind Regards,

HACC Dietitians

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