

MEALS AND NUTRITION

Need to Knows provide older adults and their families with important information to enhance their hospital or nursing home stays. Communication and teamwork are important aspects of high-quality healthcare. The individual, family, and caregivers are vital members of the team.

Why is it important?

Older adults often experience loss of taste with a decrease in saliva. Many also take medication that makes eating less enjoyable. Maintaining adequate nutrition and hydration is important to wellbeing. According to the Department of Health & Human Services, “Study after study shows that adequate food and nutrition is vitally important for promoting health, decreasing the risk of chronic disease, maintaining functionality, and helping older adults remain independent...”

What you and your family can do:

Be sure to follow any dietary recommendations from your healthcare team.

If possible, adapt your favorite foods to align with dietary recommendations.

Eat your meals in a chair and with others, when possible.

Ask your healthcare team if a dietitian consultation would be beneficial.

Wear your dentures; have dentures fitted as necessary.

Be mindful when eating; eat without watching TV or reading the newspaper.

Chew your food thoroughly.

Add flavor to food by using lemon, pepper, and other non-salt spices and herbs.

