



P R E S E N T S

HEALTHY LIVING & Nutrition

TIPS TO HELP PREVENT MALNUTRITION IN AGING ADULTS

Eating a healthy, balanced diet is an **IMPORTANT** part of maintaining good health, and can help you feel your best. Unfortunately, aging adults are at increased risk for malnutrition due to poor dentition and oral care. Promoting awareness is the **FIRST** step to help you or your loved one stay educated and informed about preventing malnutrition and maintaining a proper oral health routine.

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JUST THE BASICS... THE KEY TO A HEALTHY DIET:

PLEASE NOTE:
You May Need
Fewer Calories As
You Age Due To
Muscle Loss...
Which Is Often
The Result OF A
! Less Active
Lifestyle

Eating the right amount of calories depends on how active you are, so balancing the energy you consume with the energy you use is **CRUCIAL**. If you eat and drink too little, you'll lose weight. According to the National Institute of Aging, the guidelines for women & Men over the age of 50 is:

2,200*   1,800*

*CALORIES A DAY FOR A
"SOMEWHAT ACTIVE"
AGING ADULT

Eating a wide range of foods will ensure that you're getting a **BALANCED** diet and that your body is receiving all the nutrients it needs to maintain a successful aging routine!

[Click here to
learn more!](#)

01

WHAT IS MALNUTRITION?



“ **The World Health Organization (WHO) defines malnutrition as:**

Malnutrition refers to deficiencies, excesses or imbalances in a person’s intake of energy and/or nutrients. The term malnutrition covers 2 broad groups of conditions. One is ‘undernutrition’—which includes stunting (low height for age), wasting (low weight for height), underweight (low weight for age) and micronutrient deficiencies or insufficiencies (a lack of important vitamins and minerals). ”



- Malnutrition affects people in every country, approximately 1 in 3 people!
- Around 1.9 billion adults worldwide are overweight, while 462 million are underweight.

TIPS



Educating and providing resources about oral health care is often the best way to prevent malnutrition in aging adults!

SOURCE



WHAT ARE THE COMMON CAUSES OF MALNUTRITION RELATED TO POOR DENTITION?

02

- Common REVERSIBLE causes of malnutrition include tooth decay and gum disease.
- MEDICATIONS commonly used by older adults cause dry mouth, leading to difficulty chewing and swallowing.
- Oral health PROBLEMS from missing teeth, ill-fitting dentures, or infection can cause difficulty eating.
- ACCESS to dental care often becomes more difficult for older adults due to lack of transportation resources or decreased mental and physical faculties such as declining strength, mobility, and/or cognition.



TIPS

Loss of self-esteem is associated with loss of teeth...
↕
Which leads to decreased socialization and depression...
↕
Which in turn also increase risk of malnutrition.

WHAT CAN BE DONE? HERE ARE A FEW APPROACHES!



Ask Questions!

- It is **IMPORTANT** to speak to your doctor and mention any recent lifestyle changes that are impacting your ability to consume food and maintain a regular mealtime routine.
- Asking questions and voicing your concerns will provide your doctor the chance to provide you with professional services that can better address your concerns.

Consult Other Professionals!

Talking to a local:

- Occupational Therapist,
- Dentist, and/or
- Nutritionist



Can lead to understanding new intervention strategies, how to maintain proper oral health, and about modified food recipes that are soft, nutritious, and delicious!

Occupational Therapy (OT) Services!

- Occupational therapists (OTs) work with the client by providing a goal-directed treatment plan, and strategies/intervention(s) to help accomplish meaningful goals.

Example: If a client has a cognitive impairment and diagnosed with arthritis, an OT will consider various contexts to provide a beneficial environment and intervention for the client to brush their teeth.

OT Treatment Approaches!

- Assistive Devices/Apps: can assist the client with proper maintenance of their oral health and provide a reminder to brush/floss regularly.
- Incorporating oral health into daily routines with the use of intervention strategies i.e. calendar, can help a client to remember to schedule regular dental appointments.
- Provide clients with necessary resources (websites, handouts, community resources, etc.), to assist and provide direction with maintaining proper oral health.
- Focus on the mental and physical faculties that have decreased with age such as muscle strengthening or grip and pinch adaptations that can be due to reduced sensation.
- Access within the home environment is also considered as a secondary device such as a wheelchair may cause inaccessibility to the bathroom, which ultimately prevents access to a sink to brush one's teeth.
- An occupational profile will be used to determine the client's previous level of performance and what daily activities are most meaningful to them in order to provide the client with a treatment plan that will best address their difficulties and limitations with self-care tasks such as brushing.

Linked Resources!

The following websites listed below will provide aging adults with resources to assist with access to services, potential adaptive aids for dentition, and tips to maintain proper nutrition and oral health:

- [Eldercare Locator: Administration on Aging - CONNECTING Older Adults to Services](#)
- [Adapted Aids for Self-Care Oral Hygiene](#)
- [Oral Health Quick Tips!](#)

**Click on a link above
to get started!**

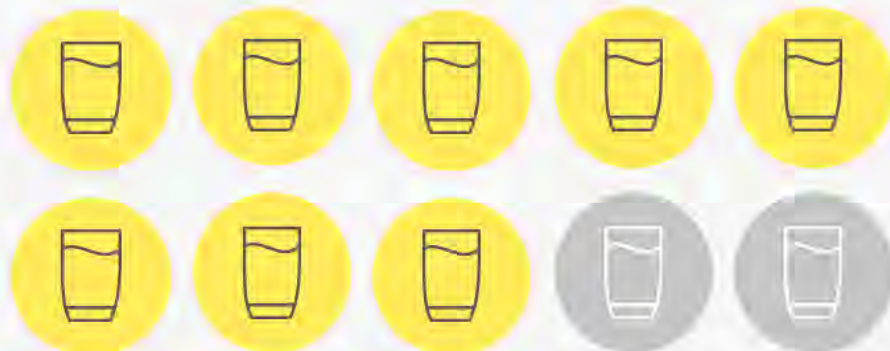
TIPS



Modifying food recipes can be an excellent way to provide an older adult with delicious food and nourishing meals!

04

DON'T GET THIRSTY!

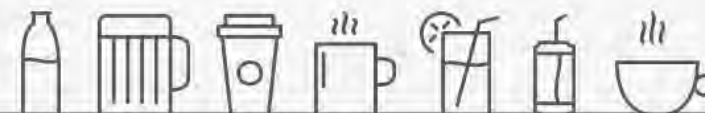


Aim for **8-10 glasses** of fluid per day. Water is the best choice as it helps to PREVENT dry mouth - the leading cause for difficulty swallowing and chewing!

Most types of drink count including *water, tea, coffee, soft drinks, milk, fruit juice and smoothies*, but try to avoid added sugar in your drinks as this can INCREASE risk of dental decay!



Click here for more information!





HEALTHY COOKING VIDEOS FOR SENIORS!

05



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QUTOY-MQzU0>

TIPS



- YouTube is a great source to provide caregivers and older adults the opportunity to cook meals at home that best fit their needs.
- Eating meals with others makes dinner time become social time!

OCCUPATIONAL ENGAGEMENT!



- The occupational therapy interventions listed above for preventing malnutrition due to poor dentition for older adults can improve occupational engagement by providing them with better health and the possibility to remain independent in their activities of daily living (ADLs), for an extended part of their life. Aging adults that adhere to a regular oral health maintenance routine will lower health costs and be provided the opportunity for successful aging.
- Example: An older adult with arthritis and cognitive impairments will experience reduced sensation and limited memory skills, respectively. A treatment plan will help assist the client and provide strategies such as a universal handle for their toothbrush or a reminder checklist to maintain a proper oral health routine.

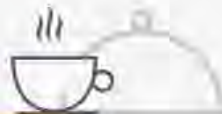
ICF Areas of Activity or Participation Impacted:

d5201 **Caring** for teeth Looking after dental hygiene, such as by brushing teeth, flossing, and taking care of a dental prosthesis or orthosis.

d550 **Eating** Carrying out the coordinated tasks and actions of eating food that has been served, bringing it to the mouth and consuming it in culturally acceptable ways, cutting or breaking food into pieces, opening bottles and cans, using eating implements, having meals, feasting or dining.

SOURCES:

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