

Nutrition Risk Assessment Handout

If you responded YES to any statement in the assessment, please refer to the corresponding number for practical suggestions to mitigate the identified risk factors and enhance your nutritional well-being.

1. No single food provides all the nutrients you need, so it's important to include a wide variety of foods in your diet.
 - A quarter of your plate should be protein (lean meats, fish, eggs, beans, lentils, yogurt, and cheese).
 - Half of your plate should be comprised of fruits and vegetables. Aim for bright colors.
 - A quarter of your plate should be whole grains (whole wheat bread, oatmeal, whole grain tortillas and pasta).
2. As you get older it is natural to start eating less. It is important to eat regularly, at least 3 times a day.
 - Ask your Senior Center about the possibility of obtaining an additional meal to take home.
3. To help increase your fruit and vegetable consumption:
 - Always try to consume the fruits and vegetables provided at your meal sites.
 - Keep canned, frozen, or fresh produce at home to include in meals or as snacks.
4. Dairy products can help decrease the risk of osteoporosis and heart conditions.
 - Try adding milk to cereals, soups, and hot drinks.
 - Have yogurt or cheese as a snack.
5. As you get older, your sense of thirst reduces which means you might not always feel thirsty when your body is already dehydrated.
 - Make a habit of consuming water, milk, coffee, or herbal tea with every meal or snack.
 - Keep a water bottle nearby throughout the day for adequate hydration.
6. Although many people enjoy alcohol socially, alcohol in large quantities can interfere with your health.
 - Large amounts of alcohol may result in weight gain and/or impaired judgment which can increase the risk of falls.
 - Inquire with your Senior Center or Area Agency on Aging about local resources or support groups.
7. Mouth pain or missing teeth can lead to difficulty chewing or swallowing which may mean eating fewer meals or meals with lower nutritional value leading to an increased risk of malnutrition.
 - Choose soft foods and ask your meal site about the possibility of having food chopped or pureed until dental concerns are addressed.
 - Consult your doctor or dentist promptly to address dental concerns.
8. If you are encountering financial difficulties in acquiring food, seek information from your Senior Center or Area Agency on Aging regarding accessible local assistance programs.
 - Inquire about the possibility of acquiring cost-effective frozen meals for weekends or when the center is not operational.
9. Partaking in shared meals can boost appetite and overall well-being. Consult your Senior Center about opportunities for communal dining on weekends or when the center is closed. Also, explore these options:
 - Plan to meet a friend at a nearby restaurant.
 - Coordinate potluck gatherings with two or more friends, changing the location each time.
10. Be aware that taking certain medications and herbs/supplements/vitamins together may negatively affect appetite and medication and/or nutrient absorption.
 - Always communicate with your doctor and pharmacist, providing information about the herbs, supplements, and vitamins you are taking.
11. Rapid weight loss or gain may be a sign of an underlying health condition that requires medical treatment.
 - Consult your doctor promptly to address this pattern.
12. If you encounter difficulties with grocery shopping, cooking, or self-feeding, reach out to your Senior Center or Area Agency on Aging for information on organizations that can provide assistance.
 - Ask about the option to buy frozen meals for weekends or when the center is closed.
 - For additional support, contact your Area Agency on Aging at (800) 551-3191.