Nutritional Requirements

Script

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# Segment 1 - What is Nutrition?

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Nutrition is understood to be the process of providing or obtaining the food necessary for health and growth. This means nutrition is not just about making sure the body has food, but that it is quality food for good health and wellbeing. This topic will teach you throughout the segments about nutritional requirements, how age and disability impacts nutrition and will teach you as the support worker techniques for safe feeding and recognising eating issues. So, in this segment we will discuss what is nutrition, what are carbohydrates, protein, vitamins and minerals, why nutrition is important, nutritional needs throughout life, feeding issues and dietary requirements.

Slide 3: What is Nutrition?

As we have already mentioned nutrition is about ensuring the body has the right foods to sustain good health and wellbeing. But how do you know what the good quality food is that is required? Foods have been divided into groups depending on the nutrients they provide. The groups are names as carbohydrates, proteins, vitamins and minerals. Each of these are further broken down. A simplified explanation is that meals need to contain portions from each group to ensure they are well balanced. It can become much more complicated than that and if people require specialised diets they should be created by a nutritionist which is someone well trained in the area of nutrition and how to ensure people are having a good, balanced diet catering to their needs.

Slide 4: What are carbohydrates?

So, what are carbohydrates? Well carbohydrates are the sugars, starches and fibres found in fruits, grains, vegetables and milk products. For example the bread you each is primarily grains and therefore a carbohydrates. Potatoes are a vegetable that is known as a carbohydrate. Carbohydrates are the body’s main source of energy. Carbohydrates are known as such because at their chemical level they are made up of carbon, hydrogen and oxygen. Many people often cut out or down on carbohydrates when dieting due to the sugar content as the body stores sugars as fat if not used. However, athletes, particularly high endurance runners will often eat a high carbohydrate diet, known as carbo-loading before training to store the sugar to use during the run.

Slide 5: What are Proteins?  
Proteins are essential nutrients for the human body. A protein is a molecule that is made up of amino acids. The role of protein in food is to provide energy like carbohydrates, however the main role in the body is for growth and repair. The amino acids provided by protein is what is used to help build and repair muscle and tissue. Legumes like beans and lentils, eggs, avocadoes, lean meats, fish and milk and milk products including cheese. These are all great sources of protein.

Slide 6: What are Vitamins?

Vitamins are a group of organic compounds which are essential for normal growth and nutrition. Vitamins are only required in small quantities because they cannot be synthesized or made by the body so they have to come from other sources. For example, Vitamin c is used by the body to repair tissue and involved in the absorption of minerals and helps with immunity and healing. Vitamin C can be found in oranges, kiwis, broccoli and other fruits and vegetables.

Slide 7: What are Minerals?

Minerals are elements found in food that our body needs to develop and function normally. There are many minerals that we need, that have specific functions, for example iron helps your body make healthy red blood cells, while magnesium helps regulate muscle and nerve function along with blood sugar levels. So, as you can see the body needs a variety of healthy foods to ensure it can function at its best.

Slide 8: Why is nutrition important?

So why is good nutrition is important? Well this is because it provides energy for a person. You know the times you have eaten a meal of takeaway that provides little to no nutritional balance and you feel heavy and lethargic? That is because you have not put in the right balance of food to provide you energy. Then there are times where you eat a good balanced diet and you feel good, that is your body telling you that it now has energy. Good nutrition also helps keep the cells in the body alive and repairing tissue. Research has shown that people who have wounds and are malnourished take longer to heal that those who have good nutrition. Malnourished means to be suffering from malnutrition which is the term for when the body is not getting enough nutrients.

Slide 9: Why is nutrition important?

Good nutrition can also help prevent disease for example, putting good quality food in your body helps the blood flow smoothly decreasing the risk of high blood pressure, heart attacks, strokes and type 2 diabetes. If the body is full of the nutrients its needs then it is also able to recover from illness faster, think of it like a car battery, if the battery doesn’t have all the charge it needs, then it doesn’t work as effectively. When it has full charge it turns over well and runs well. If you leave the light on and the battery dies, if it has previously had good connections and charge then it can jump start easier, if it has always had low charge it is harder to jump start. In this illustration the charge and connections are good food, leaving the light on is the illness. Nutrition also sustains life. We have all heard of children being malnourished in improvised countries and how people on boats, without good food contract scurvy. We know that we need to put good food in our bodies, and that without food our body starves and organs shut down.

Slide 10: Nutritional needs throughout life

During the lifespan, a person will have different nutritional needs. A baby will start of requiring milk, either by breast or formula, as it grows the nutritional requirements change, milk no longer sustains them, and you introduce solids. As a person ages they require nutrient rich foods, and often with less calories. You will often find a nutritional plan for older adults, depending on what their health needs are. Some need to be on specific diets to help them maintain weight, others will have certain food they cannot eat as it will interact with their medication. You will be responsible for ensuring you follow the nutrition plan or identify people that may benefit from a nutritionist input.

Slide 11: What are feeding issues?

Some people will have a nutritional plan due to feeding issues. Feeding issues is the umbrella term for anyone experiencing difficulty eating by either chewing or swallowing. Feeding issues also cover if a person has any discomfort or reaction to the food they are eating. A person may also be classed as having a feeding issue if they have any clinical condition to do with eating or drinking. If a person requires assistance to be feed, then this is also classed as a feeding issue.

Slide 12: What is feeding assistance?

Feeding assistance is the physical act of supporting someone to eat. It is important that everyone gets the nutrition they need, and some people might need physical help to do this. It might be due to a physical impairment such as a broken arm, or it might be due to a cognitive issue such as dementia that they have forgotten how to use utensils. Physical assistance might be feeding someone, or it might be helping them with a feeding tube or it might be that they can feed themselves but there are special preparations that need to happen for them to do this, such as having the food cut up or mashing food.

Slide 13: What are dietary requirements

It is important to follow any special dietary requirements that a person has. These might be a choice such as vegetarian due to cultural or personal beliefs. Or it might be preferences and dislikes such as a person not liking a particular food. If you ignore these it can put people off eating and could cause health issues. It may also be Allergy related such as nuts which can cause a person to become very ill if ignored, or it may be part of a specific dietary plan such as if a person is very underweight they will be on a diet designed to help put weight on in a healthy way. As we discuss nutrition in more depth throughout these segments you will see that following a persons’ nutritional plan or ignoring their plan will have significant effects on their wellbeing.

# Segment 2 – Dietary Requirements

Slide 1: Index

Every person needs to have their nutritional requirements met in order to maintain health and wellbeing. Nutritional needs are met through a balanced diet. People make choices every day about the foods they are going to eat, and this will either be helpful or detrimental to their wellbeing. This topic will address how a persons’ dietary requirements are made up and the different types of special dietary requirements there might be. We will also be covering how the personal plan impacts the care given for nutritional plans

Slide 2: Factors impacting dietary requirements

People that you work with will have a variety of dietary needs according to their medical conditions and overall wellbeing. Specific dietary requirements are based on 3 general factors. The life stage they are at, whether they have any health or medical conditions along with the persons culture, ethnicity or religion.

Slide 3: What physiological changes affect the body

Well the main life stage that you will be dealing with are older adults but remember everyone is aging so there will be changes occurring all the time. So as a person ages their muscle tone decreases, and they have less stomach acid. As the stomach acid decreases it affects how nutrients and vitamins are absorbed. Nor will they require as many calories due to the metabolic rate decrease. Now the metabolic rate is the speed at which your body burns calories. This means that as a person ages, their nutritional requirements are different.

Slide 4: Why food may need to be modified

Sometimes, as people age, they will need to have the type of food they eat modified due to difficulty swallowing or problems chewing. Food modification might be that the types of meats are altered or cooked differently so they are easier to chew and swallow. It could be that the food it chopped or minced if they have difficulty chewing. Sometimes people will need the food pureed or be on a liquid diet if they do not have the ability to chew. While others will need to be fed by a support worker or a feeding tube.

Slide 5: How may weight gain can occur

Now weight gain happens when older adults do not factor in their slowing metabolism and do not decrease their calorie intake without increasing their exercise their weight will rise. So, if they don’t adjust their food intake and increase exercise, they will gain weight. Also overeating can lead to weight gain which in turn can cause health issues such as diabetes and heart disease. Now many people are quite sedentary so moving around is essential to maintaining a stable healthy weight.

Slide 6 How may weight loss occur

Now weight loss however, happens when people struggle to eat due to difficulty in chewing or swallowing or lose motivation to eat due to loneliness or health. So if a person loses weight it can cause other health issues such as frailty and muscle loss.

Slide 7 How to manage weight issues

As a general rule, in residential care, all people are weighed monthly. This enables weight issues to be monitored. However, there are times that you will need to be weighing clients more often as their weight becomes a concern and this may be weekly for a time till get on top of the problem identified. On top of this, a nutritional plan will be put into place to support the person to be at their optimal weight. For example, if a person is overweight their portion size might be reduced or the foods modified to give them less calories. If a person is underweight, they might be given small meals more often or special high calorie drinks to help them to gain weight. You may also be asked to monitor food intake and record what they are or are not eating on a Food Intake chart

Slide 8: What Health and medical conditions may food monitoring

Now some health conditions will impact the type of nutrition a person will require. For example, if a person has diabetes then they must monitor their food intake very closely particularly the amount of carbohydrates they eat so will be on a diabetic diet. You will also notice that low fat diets or low sodium diets are required for things like heart failure, this is to help the body with absorbing foods without causing more damage to organs. It is also common for people to have allergies to different foods. Some might be a mild reaction or discomfort while other people experience severe abdominal pain, trouble breathing or skin reactions. The most concerning is when someone is so allergic, they could have an anaphylactic reaction which is where their throat swells and they are unable to breath, this can be fatal if not treated immediately. Any allergies a person has should be well documented and known to avoid giving those foods to them. Common foods people can react to are dairy, gluten, nuts, eggs. While many people can ‘grow out’ of allergies some people need to be careful their whole life. Other people might have conditions that mean they need to be careful with what they eat.

Slide 9: What health and medical conditions requiring monitoring

Sometimes a person might be required to increase certain types of nutrients due to health needs such as a high protein diet to increase muscle repair and also for wound healing. I also mentioned before if a person is underweight, they will need a high calorie diet if they are underweight or burning off a lot of calories with constant wandering. It can also be common for people to require boosting their nutrition with additional supplements, such as vitamin c tablets.

Slide 10: What other special diets may be required

Some people also choose to have a certain diet due to their cultural or spiritual or religious beliefs. So some religions are forbidden to eat certain foods such as Hindu where they do not eat beef or Jewish people don’t eat pork.

Now some religions have specific requirements like when Muslims observe Ramadam where you can only eat at certain times of the day. It is considered important as a time of personal reflection and self-discipline and only certain people are exempt from following Ramadam.

Other people have personal beliefs and values around food too and choose not to eat meat and be vegetarian or not eat any animal products at all and be a vegan. Now other people make personal choice around what they want to eat and avoid certain foods as they believe it helps them to feel better while others like to try different diets to help lose weight or maintain a healthy weight.

Slide 11: How to meet specific food requirements for people

The person planning and cooking the meals must accommodate all people’s needs, choices and requirement. This means when creating a menu, a variety of all food choices and preferences and these must be considered. For example, there may be a main choice that suits the majority of people but then adaptations to suit dietary needs must also be available. For example if the chef was making a potato bake, they would also need to make a dairy free option and a gluten free option if people required, they would not be able to just say “oh the person can just go without potatoes” as then they might be missing out on carbohydrates that their body requires. The person in charge of meal planning needs to ensure that everyone has a balanced diet, particularly if they have specific nutritional needs.

Slide 12: How will you know the specific dietary needs for a person?

It is really important that you know any specific dietary needs and food preferences of those in your care, so they need to be on their personal plan. In particular any foods that need to be avoided or any medical conditions that impact on the food they can eat. If a person had religious beliefs that impact on their nutrition, this will also need to be documented. Along with information being written in the personal plan, this needs to be communicated to those preparing their food so everyone who is a partner in a person’s care must be informed.

Slide 11: What will be in the Personal Plan

The personal plan will also give you information such as the physical help the person may need, for instance if they need to be fed or if they need specific utensils to enable them to feed themselves. If there is supervision that is needed, for example if the person has dementia and is prone to wandering off mid-meal.

Slide 12: What will be in the Personal Plan

The plan will also give any instructions from health professionals such as Speech Language Therapist or dietician on how best to support the person any modifications to the food such as chopped, minced or mashed.

The personal plan will also indicate the Best times of day for person to eat, for example they may need to take medications at certain times of the day with food. If there are any significant differences in the times people eat well, this might also be noted. For instance, a person might like a really big breakfast but eat a very small dinner, this would indicate that the best time to give them the bulk of their nutritional needs would be morning. There might also be a risk analysis and plan. For instance, if someone has allergies there will be a plan for if the person is accidently given a food, they are allergic to, what type of response they need.

Slide 13: What is your role

Remember that their needs may change as they become more independent or more dependent, so you need to be alert to changes. A person would become more independent as health returns. For example, if they had surgery and are recovering, or if they have struggled with old dentures and now the dentures have been replaced. A client may also become less independent as their health deteriorates, such as terminal illness or dementia. So, you need to report and record any changes you observe Therefore, the plan needs to be updated regularly so keep checking for any updates. It is important to work with the person around their needs, they are to be included in any plans around their dietary changes or support requirements.

# Segment 3 – Healthy Eating

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In this Segment we will discuss serving size using the food pyramid as a guide. The food pyramid was developed in the early 90’s as a way to break up the food groups to explain getting a balanced diet. So, this segment will address how do we know what to eat, food groups, serving sizes and daily requirements. Also discuss hydration, serving sizes and daily requirements.

Slide 2: How do we know what to eat

The pyramid shows the foods you should eat the least of up the top where the pyramid is at its smallest and the foods that should make up the bulk of a persons’ diet at the bottom where the pyramid is at its largest. The pyramid has changed over the years as nutritionists’ understandings and beliefs around what food is good for you has altered. In recent times, some people have stopped using the pyramid all together and refer to a healthy eating plate type diagram. There is, however, general agreement as to what types of food should be in a diet daily and what types of food should only be consumed on occasion.

Slide 3: What foods should you eat the least

The point of the pyramid is made up of foods that should only be eaten on occasion, this is because they offer the least amount of nutritional benefit and cause the most health complications. These are foods that are high in sugar like lollies and soft drink, high in fats and salt like potato chips, and takeaways, and alcohol and high caffeine drinks coffee and red bull. These should not be eaten every day. In todays’ society it is easy to access these foods. When life gets busy it can be tempting to go through the drive through of a fast-food place or pick up takeaways. While it is not harmful to eat or drink any of these occasionally a daily diet of these is harmful to the body. So, this topic will inform you on how to help your clients with their nutrition, but it is also a good reminder for you. Particularly if you are a community support worker rushing from house to house it can be tempting to eat the quick and easy food, but it will not give you any nutritional benefit and will often cause you to feel tired and slow rather than give you energy.

Slide 4: What should you eat 1 serving of a day

Now the foods you should eat the least of are fats and oils. So, when we talk about fat, which the body needs, we are not talking about food cooked in fat and oil. We are talking about food rich in Omega 3 and 6 which are oils the body needs. However, foods that contain the good fats and oils should only be consumed in small amount during the day.

Slide 5 Why are fats and oils essential for the body

These fats and oils are essential in the diet to help with energy, protection of organs and cell growth. Fats also help with absorption of nutrients and hormone production. However, eating too many fats and oils can lead to high cholesterol which puts you at risk for heart disease and stroke. Essential oils come in plant form such as canola and soy oils, Marine oils come in fish, particularly salmon and omega-6 oils can be found in nuts and seeds.

Slide 6: What should you eat 2 servings a day

The next food group on the list, with recommendations of 2 servings a day is meats, poultry, fish, eggs, beans, and nuts. These are called proteins

Slide 7 Why are proteins good for you

That is because these foods are complete protein, which contain essential amino acids like iron, zinc, and b vitamins. The body needs these nutrients for energy and the b vitamins helps the body use that energy. Research has suggested the optimum amount of this group is 2 servings a day as too much can lead to heart disease. The cuts of meat and way it is prepared is also important to note. Meats containing a lot of fat is not good for you nor is cooking it in a lot of oils is also not a healthy way to do it. Lean meats are meats with the fat trimmed off. The best option for cooking is grilling, roasting and baking meats are the better options over frying them.

Slide 8: What should you eat 3 Servings a day of

Foods that are recommended for 3 servings a day are the dairy products such as milk, yogurt, cheese, and milk.

Slide 9 Why should you eat dairy products

That is because dairy products also contain protein as well as calcium, which is required for healthy bones, teeth, gums and maintaining a healthy weight. Dairy is probably the most debated food. It is argued that dairy is only required during childhood and that the body does not need dairy, -particularly milk, in adulthood. However, it is estimated that about 75% of adults struggle to process lactose, which is found in dairy products. Then there are people who are vegan who eat a plant-based diet only. If these people do not consume dairy products, they need to find an alternative source of protein as in soy, nut, or coconut. These can be made into milk, cheese, and yoghurt.

Slide 10: What should you eat 4 Servings a day

Carbohydrates are recommended as 4 servings a day. Carbohydrates have also had a bad reputation lately due to the amount of highly processed options in this range. Often people think of simple carbohydrates like sugar that are broken down quickly in the body are good for you in great quantities, but they are not. However, complex carbohydrates are good for you. These are the breads, pasta, rice, and cereals and these are good for you. Whole grain pastas and breads are the best options and brown rice is a better option to. Generally, it is the white breads, pastas and rice that have been highly processed and do not contain the nutritional benefits found in carbohydrates.

Slide 11 Why are complex carbohydrates essential

That is because complex carbohydrates provide energy for the body and maintain blood glucose levels during exercise. However, if you eat too many carbohydrates your body stores the sugar as fat, so it is important to not overload your body with carbohydrates both simple and complex.

Slide 12: What should you eat 5 servings a day of

The food that a person should be having 5 servings a day of are the fruits and vegies.

Slide 13 Why are fruit and vegetable essential

That is because fruits and vegetables contain much needed minerals and vitamins for health and wellbeing. It also is high in fibre which is good for gut health and help with eliminating waste and toxins ingested in food. It is important to eat a range of colours within the fruit and vegetables as different colours offer different vitamins. However, do not think that by consuming large quantities of fruit juice it is good for you? It is not. One glass of orange juice is equivalent to around 4 oranges. This could be converted to simple sugars and get stored in the body as fat not to mention the negative effect it has on your teeth. Also, it is unlikely you would sit and eat 4 oranges in one sitting. Now two glasses are approximately 8 oranges which you would definitely not consume in one sitting. So, base it on whole fruit you would consume. So, drink fruit juice in moderation and you unlikely to get you into too much trouble as you would only eat one.

Slide 14: What is a serving

The food pyramid discusses how many servings a day a person should have of each food group, so it is important to discuss serving sizes. A serving size is the recommended portion of food that should be eaten. The portion size will vary according to the persons size, age, and their specialized dietary requirements.

For instance, with young children the general rule of thumb is a portion size or serving size is the size of the palm of their hand. Therefore a 2-year-old might have 1 or 2 grapes as a serving size while a 4-year-old might have 3 or 4 grapes as a serving size.

A standard adult should follow the general guidelines of the food pyramid for number of servings a day of the different food groups. Food that comes in packaging will tell you the recommended serving size of the product. For example, 1 slice of bread is 1 serving, biscuits will often say 2 biscuits is one serving size. It is important that you follow the guide on the packet to ensure you are not overfeeding a person. Many other items do not come in packages so you will need to know general rules, so the easiest way to remember food portion size it to go by the size of the people’s fist.

Slide 15: Why is fluid important

We have talked about portion sizes for food, but it is also important to note portion sizes with fluids. A person needs to get enough fluids for a body to remain healthy. Fluid is important as it flushes out toxins from the body, regulates body temperature and helps with brain function. Dehydration which is a loss of body fluid which impairs body function and causes such things constipation, impairs blood circulation and prevents excretion of toxins in the body and many other conditions. Now it can be common for older adults to become dehydrated, particularly in summer and therefore it is important to ensure older adults are getting enough water.

Slide 16: What impacts fluid requirements

Fluid requirements will be impacted by the size of the person. So, a person who is overweight will require more fluid than a person who is slimmer. The amount of fluid required is also impacted by the amount and type of exercise being undertaken. So, if a person is exercising, they need to have more water. A person’s metabolic rate will also indicate the amount of water required by the person.

Slide 17: How much fluid does a person require

As a general rule people require about 8 cups of water a day but this will vary on the size of the person. However, many people debate this and say there is no scientific evidence of this amount per person. I am sure that you have found that it can be difficult to get a person to drink 8 cups of fluid a day. So rather than stress over this, you need to consider other places they are getting fluid from like fruit, vegetable, soups, custards, and general meals. No one would doubt that fluid is not important. It is. However, do not put your clients under pressure to drink 8 cups of water on top of their daily food intake. It will cause them way too much stress and you will be fighting a losing battle. However, there are many occasions a person is drinking fluid like tea and coffee. Also be aware that older people often do not feel thirsty, so you do need to offer them fluid frequently throughout the day.

Slide 18 How much is a serving of fluid

With liquids a serving is a metric cup which is 250 mls so when people talk about a cup of something, they are referring to 250mls of the liquid. This is important to note particularly if you are monitoring fluid as a glass often can hold 300 mls, therefore they are having more than a cup of water. For more information on hydration, go to the Hydration topic in Navigation.

# Segment 4 – Life Stages

Slide 1: Index

A persons’ nutritional requirements will change depending on the life stage they are at. Life stages are broken into different timeframes of a persons’ life. Now through this topic I will be giving you approximate quantities a person should eat through their life span. Please note, these are recommended quantities and that each person has different needs and requirements. However, remember foods with insufficient nutrients to meet the body’s needs will affect not only the persons physical body but their brain function as well.

The stages are birth and infancy which is 0 – 23 months. Once a person has had their 2nd birthday, they are a child through to 18 years of age. A person is considered an adult from 19 – 64 years of age. When a person is 65 years of age, they are considered an older person.

Slide 2 What do Infants need to grow

Infants need a lot of protein and iron along with other nutrients as they are growing rapidly, and their brain is developing faster than it will during any other stage of their life. Initially a baby will receive the nutrients they need via breast milk or formula. Milk that is given from the breast in the first 48 hours of a baby's life is known as colostrum, it is highly nutritious with large amounts of antibodies to help protect the baby from infections while they develop immunity. The foods that we eat are known as solids and these are introduced to baby around 6 months of age in a pureed form. A baby will be weaned, that is stop requiring formula or breast milk around 18 months to 2 years. It is unwise to feed children this young of high sugar and highly processed foods too.

Slide 3 What does a child need to grow

A child needs a balanced diet as they grow. They should have a variety of vegetables, fruits, carbohydrates, proteins, and some dairy. Like any stage, they should not have too much sugar. Children need regular meals. It is common for children to eat 4 – 5 small meals a day. While their bodies and brains are not growing as rapidly as they did in infancy, they are still growing and developing and require regular nutrition to maintain energy. Children are quite physically active, the more active a child is the better quality, nutritional food they require. During this age they will develop likes and dislikes of certain foods and flavors. Always keep in mind, these quantities are recommended amounts. A child should not be given foods with a high sugar content as it will damage their teeth and predispose them to weight problems. So, sweets and fizzy drinks are actively discouraged.

Slide 4 What should a preschool child eat

It is recommended that during the course of the day, a pre-schooler should be eating 2 servings of fruit and at least 2 servings of vegetables. They should also be eating approximately 4 servings of good quality breads and cereals. At least one serving of meat, fish, and eggs, more if they are highly active. Children require more calcium than adults and should have 2 or 3 servings of dairy a day.

Slide 5 What should a school child eat

Once a child is school age it is recommended to increase each food group by approximately 1 serving a day. So that means. They should have 2-3 servings of fruit and 3 servings of vegetables. 5 servings of bread and cereals. Two servings of protein in meat, fish, or eggs and 3-4 servings of dairy in milk products, cheese, or dairy substitute. Now of course this will depend on the child and their activity level. So, remember these are recommended requirements. Again, it is preferable to restrict high sugar foods like sweets and fizzy drinks as this will predispose children to tooth decay, obesity, and their affect brain function.

Slide 5 What should adolescents eat

Adolescents is from age 13 – 18 however the NZ Nutritional Foundation suggest it is 11-18. So, shall we say from the beginning of puberty to be on the safe side rather than a set age. This is a time where there is significant growth and development. During periods of growth spurts they will need to eat more. The food needs to be good quality, healthy food. You will note this is the same as for a child but bear in mind a serving is more for the older a child gets because a serving is the size of the palm of their hand. So, they should be eating at least 5 servings of fruit and vegetables throughout the day, it is recommended that 2 are fruit and at least 3 vegetable. The growing body also needs plenty of protein which can come from fish, red meat, beans, nuts, eggs, lentils, cheese, and milk. Protein is required for building tissue which is what makes a person grow and grow strong. It is important they get good sources of iron and calcium too but also Vitamin C to help with the absorption of iron. If they have a balanced diet, they should be able to receive all their body needs. Eating too much sugar and junk food is not good for anyone but can be quite challenging to break a habit with adolescents.

Slide 6 Adolescents – mental health and nutrition

During this time, it can be common for both boys and girls to feel pressure to look a certain way. They might want to limit what they eat to stay thin or spend a lot of time working out at the gym and using a lot of energy. An adolescent need to eat to stay healthy, and they need a good sense of body image. So help them to make good choices around food and exercise. Poor dietary habits can impact growth and development, especially extreme cases such as anorexia nervosa which is when a person stops eating all together or significantly under-eats, or bulimia which is when a person will binge eat then make themselves sick. Poor eating habits can also end up effecting nutritional behavior when they become adults, which can lead to obesity, heart disease and strokes.

Slide 7 What do adults need

People are classed as adults from 19 through to 64 years of age. Good nutrition will help maintain good health. As the body slows its growth down eating habits need to change. Adults need to eat a good range of fruit and vegetables, cereals, breads, pasta, rice, and meats at about the same servings a for a child. Adults, like all age groups should only be having a small amount of fats and sugars. An adult should ensure they are eating enough to get through the day and perform all the tasks required of them. Healthy calories from foods rich in vitamins and minerals are vital for good health and energy, this will help fight of illness and disease and keep the body functioning at its best. Calories from foods such as takeaways, packet meals and other mineral poor foods will only end up being stored as fat and cause health issues. They are of no benefit to the body.

Slide 8 What causes undernutrition in adults

Lack of good quality nutrition can steam from poverty where is it cheaper to buy the $1 loaf of white bread vs the $4 whole grain loaf. Lack of quality nutrition can also signal a person does not have a good life balance and is eating quick foods instead of quality foods because they are feeling rushed and stressed. Lack of good nutrition can be an issue for many adults. This can lead to significant health issues; it is one of the reasons that people who live in poverty are more likely to die younger and have more health issues than people who are able to afford good quality food. Research has shown a strong correlation between poverty and good health and access to good food is a significant contributing factor to this.

Slide 9 Adults – mental health and nutrition

Mental health can also play a significant part in healthy food choices. If a person is suffering from depression it can be harder to take the time to prepare a good meal. This means they may not eat or eat foods that are packaged and instantly accessible. These poor-quality foods then decrease energy levels and increase feelings of tiredness and depression creating a vicious cycle. As mentioned in the adolescent section, food related behaviours can impact adulthood. A teenager that has struggled with bulimia wont suddenly become well in adulthood; it will be something they battle throughout their life.

Slide 10 What impacts older adult’s nutrition

Once a person is 65 or older, they are considered an older adult. As a person ages it can be harder to get the daily calories required due to a lack of appetite, digestive issues, or social issues.

Slide 11 What impacts older adult’s nutrition

They may also lose their sense of smell or taste which can affect the enjoyment of food. The further they are away from the source of the cooking to stimulate the taste buds can impact on sense of smell to. If you don’t use it you lose it applies here. Physical ability to eat or motor coordination to hold utensils may affect a person at home. A person might find it more difficult to cook or prepare a meal as they age too due to their physical ability of standing, moving around, bending, lifting, and stirring required. Dry mouth from dehydrations or medications can also impact on a person eating. A dry mouth makes it difficult to chew as we need saliva to help form a bolus to make it easier to swallow

Slide 12 What do older adults require

Even though they may suffer from issues as mentioned in the previous slides, older adults still need to eat plenty of fruit and vegetables, proteins, and carbohydrates from good quality sources. This, of course is the same as everyone else. Because you age, does not mean your dietary requirement change.

Slide 13 How to ensure older adults eat

While they may not need as much as when they were younger you may need to serve smaller portions, ensure they don’t skip a meal or leave out certain foods. Avoid dehydration which can be a common issue in older adults. As I mentioned n Slide 11, lack of fluid and medications can make a person’s mouth dry and make it difficult to swallow. Dehydration can also be linked to forgetting to drink, not wanting to drink due to fear of incontinence or thinking they are getting enough fluids with other drinks than water so you need to make sure they get sufficient fluid to keep their mouth as moist as possible.

Slide 14 Mental health conditions that can affect an older adult

Something else that can affect an older person maybe their mental health. This might be due to loneliness, depression, or grief. As a person ages they might lose their loved one or struggle with decreased mobility which can lead to feeling depressed. A person may have also struggled with mental health throughout their adulthood which will continue as an older adult. A person with cognitive issues might struggle to remember how to cook or eat. It may not be apparent at first to family and friends that a person is struggling to remember how to cook or organise themselves to get to the supermarket to get food. A person might be struggling with cognitive ability for a while before people realise what is going on and get appropriate supports in place to help them. Our next segment will address a persons’ health and impairment status in more detail.

# Segment 5 – Health Impairment

Slide 1: Index

Nutrition plays an important part in health and wellbeing. However, a persons’ health and impairment will impact their nutrition, including their needs and requirements along with what they are unable to have. This segment will address different dietary requirements according to health needs including eliminating or increasing certain foods, aging and health status, food for diabetics and heart failure and blood pressure problems, and food intolerances.

Slide 2: When would certain foods be eliminated or minimised

Some health conditions will mean certain foods need to be eliminated or minimised from a diet. For example, a person who has congestive heart failure will need to reduce the amount of salt that is in the average diet. This is because salt consumption can increase or contribute to fluid retention which impacts the ability to breath and increases swelling which puts more pressure on the heart. A person who has limited mobility will also require less calories overall than someone who is more active. Its important they don’t become overweight as it will hinder the ability to mobilise. People who are overweight and are on a reduction diet so would need to look at portion size.

Slide 3: When would certain foods be increased

There are also times that an increase in certain foods to improve the wellbeing of a person in some health conditions. For example, a person who has a muscular or bony injury should increase the amount of protein they eat as protein helps repair bones and muscles. Other people with conditions such as cancer or are significantly underweight might benefit from specialized supplements aimed at increasing calories, vitamins, and minerals. Also, a person who has a leg ulcer would require and increase in protein to help with healing the ulcer.

Slide 4 When does nutrition impacts on aging and health status

As a person ages they are more likely to face health or impairment issues like injuries or deficiencies due to under nutrition. This means they are not eating enough of the right food their body requires. This may be due to things like poor dental health, poverty or even the inability to get out and purchase quality food. It might be that they need help to manage existing conditions they could previously manage on their own and no longer can. Therefore, it is important for support workers to have an understanding of some of the more common health conditions and how nutrition impacts them. I will now discuss some of these conditions and how they are impacted by nutrition so that you as the support worker can know how to manage the nutritional requirements of your clients.

Slide 5: How diabetes affects a person

It is well known that diabetes impacts a persons’ health and dietary requirements. Insulin is a hormone that is released to respond to glucose in the blood. People develop diabetes when their body cannot make or effectively use insulin. This means that their body is not able to break down the amount of glucose in the body causing the glucose level to rise. This then means the body cannot use the glucose for energy. A high blood sugar is harmful to a persons’ health. There are two types of diabetes. Type 1 diabetes Which is when the pancreas produces little or no insulin, Type 2 diabetes which effects the way the body processes glucose or resists insulin.

Slide 6: What is type 1 Diabetes

As I mentioned, type 1 diabetes means the body does not produce any or enough insulin, this means the person is required to give themselves medication in the form of an insulin injection or pump to put insulin into the body in order to process glucose. If they are on injections, then they will likely have to inject themselves twice a day and sometimes more frequently. If they are on a pump the pump continuously monitors their blood sugar levels and adjusts the insulin rate accordingly. Pumps will need to be monitored to ensure they stay in good working order. Insulin cannot be given orally as the stomach acid will destroy the medication so it cannot be used to convert glucose to energy.

Slide 7: What is the role of the support worker

As a support worker, your job may include ensuring the person eats at certain times during the day. If a person with diabetes does not eat regularly their blood sugar levels could drop too low and make them sick. You may also need to support them to check their blood sugar levels by using the lancing device and test strip or a sensor depending on the device your client has. Some people if they have become injured or struggling with cognition may also need help to give themselves the insulin injection, please note you need to be trained before you can do this. Support workers will also need to give first aid if the blood sugar levels get too high or too low, so you need to know what to do.

Slide 8: What is Type 2 Diabetes

Type 2 diabetes is where the body has too little insulin to convert glucose to energy or the body rejects or ignores the insulin it receives to convert to glucose to energy. This is often caused by unhealthy nutrition and or where a person is overweight. This is particularly dangerous where a person has an increase in central body weight. Therefore, if a person is overweight with type 2 diabetes, the nutritional guide they will have will be both to manage the diabetes as well as reduce weight.

Slide 9 What should a diabetic eat

The diet for a diabetic is really important. The nutritional guide they will be given will be to eat regularly but with small portions. They should not eat foods high in sugar. Because carbohydrates break down into sugars it is important to limit the amount of carbohydrates eaten. A person will also be told to limit their fats and alcohol intake as well. They will, however, be asked to eat plenty of vegetables and whole grain foods. They may also have oral medication to help control blood glucose levels. The aim is to keep their blood sugar level in the normal range of between 4 and 7. Provided a diabetic person has a balanced diet and eat regularly they should be able to maintain a healthy, stable blood sugar levels.

Slide 10: What are the symptoms of hypoglycaemia

Hypoglycaemia is when blood sugar levels get too low. When a person has become hypoglycaemic, they may get confused or show personality changes and become overly excited. They might also get sweaty, shaky, and pale and be very hungry.

Slide 11 How to treat hypoglycaemia

When a person becomes hypoglycaemic the first aid treatment, they need is to raise their blood sugar levels. You can do this by giving them something high in sugar for example lollies or lemonade. This needs to be followed up with something more substantial like a sandwich or other form of complex carbohydrate. So the idea is to get the blood sugar back up as quick as you can with simple sugars, which diabetics restrict normally but are important if hypoglycaemic. The simple sugar needs to be followed it up with something that is going to be help maintain the blood sugar level like an egg, tuna or peanut butter sandwich or a meal. For more information on diabetes, go to the diabetes topic under navigation.

Slide 12: How to treat heart failure and blood pressure with diet

If a person is living with heart failure or has high blood pressure, they will be asked to have a low sodium diet. Sodium comes in the form of salt, which older adults often want to add to foods as their taste buds alter and many are used to adding salt to their food. However, it is important to find other ways to flavour food, such as using pepper, lemon juice, garlic, or herbs. A person who has heart issues will be asked to not add salt when cooking or eating food. They will also need to eat predominantly unprocessed, fresh foods. Where there is an option available to a person, they should choose the low salt packaged food. If a person is able to reduce the salt in their diet it will help control their blood pressure and place less stress on their heart.

Slide 13: What is Coeliac Disease

If a person has Coeliac disease it means their body cannot process gluten and needs to be on a Gluten free diet. There are also people who are gluten intolerant which means their body can take small doses of gluten in some products but cannot eat products high in flour such as bread, but they do not have coeliac disease.

Slide 14 What is gluten

Gluten is a plant-based protein which is found mainly in wheat. Alongside those that are Coeliac which means their body cannot tolerate any gluten and must not be given anything with gluten in as they will become very unwell. Therefore, nutritional advice for these people is to avoid foods made with flour or anything with wheat, rye, and barley.

Slide 15 What can a coeliac disease eat

Eat foods made from alternatives such as corn and rice. They can also eat meat, dairy, fruit, and vegetables – pretty much anything else. There are an increasing number of products that are gluten free and often supermarkets have an area that is gluten free and dairy free where you can shop for what you need. Advice given is to read labels of products carefully if not shopping in the gluten free section as some products such as soy sauce and other sauces may contain gluten in them. Also, products that you often wouldn’t expect such as ice cream can have gluten in it.

Slide 16: What is Lactose Intolerance

People who are lactose intolerant will need to be on a Dairy free diet. Lactose is a simple sugar found in milk products.

Slide 17 How does lactose intolerance affect a person

The small intestine should have an enzyme called lactase which splits the lactose into two sugars. The body then absorbs the sugars and uses it. Sometimes however, the body does not have the lactase enzyme which means the lactose goes straight through into the colon where it causes an irritation leading to cramps, bloating and diarrheoa. These people who lack the lactase enzyme should be on a dairy free or lactose free diet.

Slide 18 What can lactose intolerant people eat

People with Crohn’s disease, and often people with Coeliac disease also need to eliminate lactose from their diet. This means they need to avoid products containing milk, including cheese, yoghurt, and ice cream. Products made from Almond, coconut, soy, or rice products are good alternatives. Like gluten free products, dairy free products are becoming more readily available and shops will often have an area with dairy free products on display. Because the body still needs calcium, which is often sourced from dairy, people who cannot eat dairy will need to have supplements to provide them with calcium, riboflavin, and vitamin D.

Slide 19: How do allergies affect people

There are many other food allergies around and generally exclusion diets are the best option. People can be intolerant or allergic to a specific type of food or additive within food and will show symptoms after eating it. These may be a sore, crampy stomach, swelling or itchiness. In more severe allergies, the throat will begin to swell needing immediate first aid so they will often carry an epi-pen with them in the event they eat foods they are allergic to. This type of reaction is called anaphylaxis. Some people are so allergic just being around the items can cause issues. Peanuts can often bring about severe reactions, particularly in children and therefor many kindergartens and schools have a no nuts policy in order to keep these children safe. The difference between an intolerance and an allergy is the severity of the reaction.

Slide 20: What are some other common foods allergies

Common food allergies are to eggs, nuts, and shellfish, but people can be allergic to all sorts of things. It is important as a support worker to know what people have allergies to and help them avoid these foods. You need to be aware of what foods or additives they react to and how they react to them. You also need to check labels and ingredients carefully if you are helping them to prepare food and know the signs and symptoms of a reaction and how to treat it. The symptoms to watch out for include itchiness or swelling, particularly around the eyes, mouth, and throat. A rash or hives, stomach pain and in severe cases they will have difficulty swallowing. People with known allergies should have medication available to alleviate these symptoms and should have a Medi Alert bracelet on.

Slide 21: How do you know what to do

If a person you are supporting has a known allergy or needs to be on specific diet due to health conditions this should be in their personal plan. You also need to make sure you have read the company policies and procedures around dietary needs and allergies along with treating reactions. There will be guidelines to follow in the event medical assistance is required so know what to do for allergic reactions. As a general rule, the faster a reaction appears the more severe it is likely to be. In this case call for urgent medical assistance.

# Segment 6 – Nutrition and Weight

Slide 1: Index

In this segment we will discuss different nutritional needs for those needing to lose weight and for those needing to gain weight. So, we will look at low fat diets, weight reduction diets, high calorie, and high protein diets as well as the use of supplement feedings to a diet.

Slide 2: Why is a person on a low-fat diet

A person may use a low-fat diet plan if they want to reduce their cholesterol or want to control their weight. On a low-fat diet, saturated fats make up 7-10% of a persons’ energy requirements. A person should not cut out fat completely as the body needs some fats in order to maintain certain functions such as cell growth and warmth.

Slide 3: How to reduce fats in your diet

If a person needs to be on a low-fat diet, then some of the ways they can reduce fat is to choose lean red meat and trim all the fat off the meat before cooking it. Another option available is to use low fat dairy products such as milk, cheese, or yogurt. Now some people think that margarine is a low-fat option, but the reality is fat is fat regardless to the product you use. However, margarine lacks the essential nutrients that butter has but it does not contain cholesterol which butter does. A person on a low-fat diet will also need to limit their intake of certain foods such as fried food, chocolate, nuts, and seeds.

Slide4: How to reduce fat in your diet

They will also need to avoid processed food as much as possible as there is often a lot of saturated fats and low nutritional value foods in these products. A person on a low-fat diet can, however, eat plenty of vegetables and wholegrain items such as wholegrain bread, cereals, and pasta. These are usually much less processed. It is also helpful to ensure they have appropriate portion sizes; it stands to reason that if you are eating large portions then you are consuming more fats.

Slide 5: What do people do on a weight reduction diet

Well a person might be on a weight reduction diet may be trying to lose weight. However, in the process they should ensure that their diet still contains all the food groups so that it is well balanced. They achieve weight loss by ensuring they are consuming less calories than what their body uses during the day and increasing exercise as well to burn off the calories. This can often be achieved by smaller portion sizes.

Slide 6: Other ways to reduce weight by diet

A person who is trying to lose weight can use a lot of the same principles as those that are on the low-fat diet. For example, avoiding processed foods such as packet pasta and sauce products and white bread and eating good quality food such as vegetables and whole grain food.

Slide 7 Other ways to reduce weight by diet

Another way is by replacing food options. For example, you can replace coffee which dehydrates the body causing bloating with herbal tea. Another option is to use vegetable oil instead of animal fats which are high in polyunsaturated fats. However grilling food instead of fried is better and so is lean meat instead of fatty meat. Also, it is important to drink plenty of water as drinking water helps boost the metabolism and will also help you from retaining water.

Slide 8: Who would be on a high calorie diet

Working with older adults might mean that you also need to help a person to gain weight. In order to gain weight a person needs a high calorie diet. High calorie diets are also used elite athletes who exercise a lot, however in your role it will be more likely you will use a high calorie diet for someone who is recovering from an illness. An older adult that is sick or has lost their appetite for whatever reason may need help to maintain or gain weight.

Slide 9: How to provide a high calorie diet

Please note that increasing calories is not about eating extra chocolate or takeaways. It needs to be done in a controlled healthy manner. The food needs to be both high in calories while also providing quality nutrition. This can be done a few ways. One option is to increase the number of meals a person has. Eating regular high-quality food will increase the number of calories consumed in a day. Have plenty of high calorie snacks available that a person can help themselves to. If a person is struggling with the desire to eat, then offering them their favourite foods can help as this will stimulate their saliva glands and hopefully increasing the desire to eat.

Slide 10: Requirements for high calorie diet

Another option is to increase calories with supplement drinks. These a calorie rich product that can come prepared in small quantities or in powder form for you to mix yourselves. There are many good products available through a doctors’ prescription that are formulated to help people gain weight particularly for people who can only eat small meals or when struggling to eat at all. You may know some of the products as Sustain, Complan or Fortisip. A person can also increase their calorie intake buy eating “calorie dense” foods such as nuts and seeds, avocadoes, cheese, and eggs. You can also increase the amount of cream and butter in the diet and make things like milk puddings and have with ice-cream.

Slide 11: When would a high protein diet be considered

If a person is in need of building up muscle following an injury or if they have been malnourished, then a high protein diet might be considered. A high protein diet is when at least 30% of the daily energy requirements are delivered from a protein source. A person is likely to have a large portion of food high in protein and smaller portions of carbohydrates.

Slide 12: What to eat on a high protein diet

If a person is required to be on a high protein diet, then their diet will consist of small frequent meals made up of foods such as lean meat and fish in a sandwich. Meat is higher in protein that many other options. For example, a 100grm portion of chicken will have 27grams of protein, while a jam sandwich has just 5. Meat however can be expensive, and some people do not eat meat, therefore another food high in protein which is also quite affordable is eggs or cheese which can also come in the form of a sandwich. Also, milk shakes or eggnog are good options as well.

Slide 13: What to eat on a high protein diet

Nuts can also be a good option as a high protein snack. This could be in the form of eating the nuts themselves or as a spread such as peanut butter if a person cannot chew nuts. Juice and milk are a good drink options for getting extra protein. Some people might also choose to use special high protein formulated drinks such as complan or Forti sip. There are also many options that athletes use but these can vary in quality and price, so it is best to check with the doctor if a supplement drink is to be used.

Slide 14: When is supplementation used

I have briefly mentioned high calorie and high protein supplement dinks. There are also any other supplement options available. If a person is struggling to get their daily intake of essential nutrients, then supplements might be a way to help them maintain good health. Before starting supplements, it is important that a doctor or dietician is consulted. Once a doctor or dietician has agreed that a person should be on supplements then this should be recorded in their personal plan. Sometimes it might be noted on a medicine chart as some supplements can interact with medication.

Slide 15: How long are supplements used for

A person might only need to take supplements for a short period of time while recovering from illness, injury or surgery. Or a person might need to be on supplements for a long time or permanently if there are ongoing concerns about nutrition due to their ability to eat or diet choices. Over the last segments you will have learned there are many factors that go into nutritional requirements and many variations of diets. The next segment will address the impact culture has on diets and nutrition.

# Segment 7 – Diet and Culture

Slide 1: Index

We have covered how allergies and health can impact our nutritional needs; however, a persons’ culture can also impact on their nutrition. Religion and personal beliefs can alter the types of food eaten by a person. In this segment we will look at some cultural beliefs and dietary choices people make. We will also discuss the impact on nutrition along with the nutritional considerations that need to be undertaken to support people eating according to their beliefs.

Slide 2: What are vegetarian, pescatarian and vegan diets,

When a person describes themselves as a vegetarian it means they will not eat any meat in their diet. They will however eat products made from animals such as eggs, milk and milk products, honey etc. Some people will not eat meat from land animals but will eat fish, these people are known as pescatarian. Other people might identify themselves as vegan. These people will not eat any meat but will also not eat any products made from animal by-product either. This means they will not eat any cheese, eggs, milk, or anything derived from animals’ fat. Essentially, they have a plant-based diet.

Slide 3: What to consider for vegans and vegetarians

People can remain healthy eating a vegan or vegetarian diet, but it does require planning. You will need to ensure that all their nutritional needs are met. So, you need to take the time to ensure a person on a vegan diet has no milk products, eggs or other animal products used in whatever you are cooking. Now for a vegetarian and pescatarian, you need to make sure there is no meat in their diet. Now meat is an easy and effective way to gain iron and protein so if they are not eating meat, then foods of the same quality need to be provided and they may require larger portions to get the equivalent iron and protein. For example, iron is found in leafy green vegetables but not at the same level as found in red meat. Supplements may also be used to top up the nutritional levels required for optimal health. For example, many vegans will take iron supplements. People will also substitute products such as soy for tamari or almond milk instead of cows’ milk. Never think that you can just add products they do not or cannot eat in their diet thinking they will not know. It is abuse to not provide for the needs of the person and slipping in a bit of milk to a vegan or giving a person with dementia meat is not okay.

Slide 4: What to take into consideration for Maori Culture

Within Maori culture there are two important considerations that need to be observed. The first is Tapu. Now Tapu means sacred or set apart. Anything that is Tapu should not touch food. The second consideration is Manaakitanga which is about fostering relationships, which includes hospitality. This includes friendliness, generosity, and kindness around food.

Slide 5: How to support Maori Culture practices

Food preparation and how you manage the kitchen should be considered when working with Maori. Typically, a way in which you show respect to Maori culture is that you follow a few guidelines to honor beliefs around Tapu. For example, you do not put food in the same refrigerator as medicine, tea towels should only be used to dry dishes, not dry hands, or cover food. You should also never pass food over a persons’ head as the head is Tapu.

Slide 6: How to support Maori culture practices

Manaakitanga is really important in Maori culture It is about taking the time to know someone. During Marae visits you will have the greetings then you will stop to share food. Food is also shared at meetings and greetings often referred to as a whakatau. To honor Maori culture, you need to ensure you are making time and space for people to eat and share food at meetings. You can support people by having healthy food options at these meetings and supporting a client to put out healthy food options if you are doing in home support and they are having people over.

Slide 7: How to support people from the Pacific Islands

People from the pacific islands have some similar cultural practices around food being shared as part of a welcome or at any function. This will often contain fish, tubers like taro, sweet potato and casava, and coconuts. Coming from an island nation, fish is an obvious easy source of nutrition and features significantly in their diet. The temperature in the Pacific's allow for good quality coconuts and root vegetables, or tubers, to grow making these food sources abundant and therefore a key feature in their diet. Ensuring there are dishes available with familiar flavours is a way you can support people from the Pacific Islands.

Slide 8: How to support a person of Muslim faith

For people of the Muslim faith it is important the meat is Halal which means meat that has been killed according to Muslim practice. So only serve Halal meat. Also, Muslims cannot eat anything that has come from a pig, so this means you never serve pork, bacon, or ham. Many Muslims will also observe Ramadan which is observed from late April to late May where they will fast from sunrise to sunset to allow more time for prayer and reflection. So, you need to ensure they have food available before sunrise and after sunset. Ramadan is mandatory for all healthy adults but children who have not reached puberty, the elderly, those who are physically or mentally incapable of fasting, pregnant women, breast-feeding mothers and travellers are exempt. Therefore, they should not be forced to eat anything during the day however it is important to provide them with water.

Slide 9: What are Hindu beliefs and nutrition

Within Hindu there are a wide variety of traditions and variations in food beliefs within their religion. However, on the whole most Hindu people view cows as sacred so they will not eat beef. Many Hindus are vegetarian or if they do eat meat it will be limited and must be from a humane, quick cull meaning the animal suffers little harm.

Slide 11: How to support a person of Hindu faith

When you are supporting a person, who is Hindu you will need to talk to them to find out their personal stance on eating any meat. This will need to be documented in their personal plan and followed. If the person eats meat you need to respect their beliefs about the way it is culled, and use brands accepted by Hindu faith. If vegetarian, you must never prepare, cook, or serve food that has come in contact with meat, fish, or eggs. For example, you would not prepare a beef dish at the same time you are preparing their vegetarian dish.

Slide 11: What to consider in the Jewish Culture and nutrition

Food that conforms to Jewish culture is known as Kosher. The way a food is prepared will also determine if it is kosher or not. You cannot prepare kosher food with utensils and machinery that has prepared non-kosher food.

It may help to have an area kept aside for preparation of Kosher food where there are set utensils and machinery that only does the kosher food. It is also important to ask the person what they will and will not eat and have this in their meal plan.

Slide 12 What are Kosher food

For an animal to be kosher it must have split hooves and chew their cud. So, these are cows, goats, deer, and sheep. Non-Kosher meats are pigs and rabbit. Fish must have fins and removable scales, so animals like lobster and shellfish are not kosher. Kosher poultry are domestic chickens, geese, ducks, and turkey. It is non-Kosher to mix milk and animal products together.

# Segment 8 – Food Preparation and aid with feeding

Slide 1: Index

Some people will have health or impairment issues that effects on their ability to eat. To overcome this barrier, they may need to have the way in which the food is prepared altered for them to eat. They may also need help to eat. This segment will address different textures and ways of altering food to best support people facing difficulties. It will also cover reasons why people may need different textures, ways of supporting them with eating and what your role is.

Slide 2: What does different textures mean?

Well different textures of food mean how food is modified to make food easy to eat. Essentially there are three different food textures described when discussing modified food. There is soft which is food that is naturally soft or cooked and cut which alters the texture. Examples of soft food is mashed potatoes, bananas, and eggs. Then there is minced and moist foods. These are foods such as minced meat, pasta, and rice. They are foods that can be easily mashed with a fork. Then there is food that have their texture altered so it is smooth. So, these are foods that have been pureed, they are lump free and moist. These might be pureed fruits, vegetable or even smoothies. Meat can be pureed too.

Slide 3: What are the different thicknesses of these textures

As well as different textures, there are also 3 recognized thicknesses for fluids which have been endorsed by the NZ Speech Therapy Association. This is to keep a standard across the industry. The first is mildly thick which is used to describe food that will run freely off the spoon while leaving a coating on the spoon. The second is moderately thick fluid which is used to describe food that will drop off the spoon in thick dollops. Then there is extremely thick fluid, which is described as, being able to sit on the spoon and does not flow off it at all.

Slide 4: What are liquid diets

Well a liquid diet is when a person has had their diet partially or completely replaced with liquid options. A liquid diet can be made up of clear fluids such as water or milk drinks or milk products such as milo, ice cream, yogurt, and smooth soups with a creamy texture. Hot drinks can also be used as a liquid option, such as tea or coffee.

Slide 5: What are liquid diets

Also, liquid diets can be sports drinks which are full of electrolytes and can be helpful if a person has been experiencing a gastro bug or protein shakes which are a good source of energy, protein, and calories. Liquid diets are used if a person is unable to chew or swallow solid foods. People often use liquid diets if they are wanting to lose weight fast and can be an effective way to get a lot of nutrition quickly such as blending various fruits and vegetables and adding yoghurt to make a smoothie.  However losing weight fast is not generally a reason in residential care for a person to be on a liquid diet.

Slide 6: What is Dysphagia?

Now that you understand what the different types of fluids and textures are that people may consume, we will address why people might need these different textures. The most common reason is dysphagia is the term used for people who have feeding or swallowing issues. It essentially means difficulty in swallowing where it takes more time and effort to move food or liquid from the mouth to the stomach.

Slide 7 Examples of conditions that could result in dysphagia

This may be a result of injury such as spinal cord injury or illness such as Parkinson's or Alzheimer's or stoke. People with these issues may require thickened food and texture changed foods, for example, foods that have been mashed or pureed. Mashed or pureed food are also given to people who have had surgery or an illness affecting their stomach or bowel as it is easier to swallow.

Slide 8: How dental and oral problems affect feeding and swallowing

If a person is having dental or any oral health issues it can make it incredibly difficult or painful for a person to eat. Oral health problems can include tooth pain, for instance if a person has a cavity or a broken tooth. Gum pain may also an issue. This could be from infections such as gingivitis or periodontitis. If both of these conditions are left untreated, they can cause significant issues in the mouth making it difficult for a person to eat. The person might also have ill-fitting dentures which will make it difficult to eat, therefore it is important to check how the person denture is fitting if you suspect an issue.

Slide 9: How dental and oral problems affect feeding and swallowing

People can sometimes get ulcers or other sores in their mouth which can be painful reducing the desire to eat. A person might also experience dry mouth. This makes it difficult for a person to chew and swallow and saliva is needed to moisten the food to aid chewing and swallowing. If a person is suddenly struggling to eat it is a good idea to check their oral health and find out the reason.

Slide 10: How Illness and pain affect feeding and swallowing

If a person is feeling unwell or in pain, then this will affect their desire to eat. It may be due to the pain or illness and they feel nauseous. It could the smell of food making them feel sick. It might also be that they are vomiting and not able to keep food down. These people will need to be encouraged to eat or if they can’t then the best option is for them to at least have fluid. This can start with sports drinks or lemonade so they can absorb the sugar and begin to regain energy. Glucose is also known to be a natural pain relief. At the very least they must have water to prevent dehydration which can make them really unwell.

Slide 11: How medications affect feeding and swallowing

Medications can affect a persons’ ability to eat. Some medications can cause dry mouth which was discussed a few slides ago. Medications can also cause nausea so the person will not feel like eating. It is important to note any of these side effects affecting a person's ability to eat and discuss them with the nurse. It may be that the medication can be changed, or a plan formed to help the person continue to get nourishment while on the medication. Remember you are the eyes and the ears for the Registered Nurse so always report any observations not matter how small.

Slide 12: How a person’s life stage can affect feeding and swallowing

As a person ages there are changes that happen in the body that can affect a persons ability to chew and swallow. Teeth for example may degenerate necessitating their removal and replaced with dentures. This may have an effect on the types of food they can eat while they adjust to dentures, or they may need softer foods for a while their gums are healing if they are not getting dentures. As a person ages their sense of smell declines as well therefore the food needs to not only look appealing, it has to smell appealing as well to entice them to eat. Also, their taste buds diminish, and food may not taste that good to them lacking flavour so they may not want to eat. It is important that a person can smell the food cooking too as this is part of stimulating the taste buds to prepare the person for the enjoyment of their meal. You can find out more on sense of smell and taste in Aging process Sensory system under navigation.

Slide 13: How physical impairment impacts eating

There are different medical conditions and injuries which affects the physical ability to eat or for a person to feed themselves. These impairments might be temporary, such as being in a sling following shoulder surgery or a fracture or recovering from jaw surgery requiring the food to be modified. It may be that it only needs to be cut up for them or they require a liquid diet for a period of time. It could also be a permanent impairment such as Cerebral Palsy or paralysis where the persons inability to feed themselves will be for the rest of their life.

Slide 14: How cognitive Impairment impacts eating

People may develop a cognitive impairment after suffering a traumatic brain injury, dementia or intellectual impairment. This may cause a person to need some type of aids to help with eating and drinking. This could be physically feeding them by a support worker or having specially adapted cutlery, plates or drinking vessels. It could also be that they require a special seat to aid them to sit comfortably and encouraging them to keep eating.  All of these devices or adaptions help to promote independence which should always be the aim for a person in care. A person who has behavioral issues might also need similar help as well. Behavioral issues might arise from an underlying cognitive issue associated with a medical condition.

Slide 15: What the Persons Plan tells you

As you will be working with many different people all with their own likes and dislikes, abilities and challenges it is important to know where to go if you are unsure if a person will need support and what kind of support they will need. Each person should have a well-documented Personal plan. This will tell you what help they need and what level of aid required. Remember a personal plan is a living document that should be adjusted when there are changes for the person affecting their ability to eat and drink.

Slide 16: How to approach the person

As you gain an understanding of reasons why people need help and the differing ways of aiding you will develop confidence in approaching different situations. For example one person might be quite happy to let you cut up the food into small bite size portions while another person may be angry or frustrated that they require help to do a task they used to do with ease. With both people you need to learn ways to aid them while showing respect and making the situation as positive as possible.  So, if possible, ask them what assistance they want from you. Do they want any special devices to help? Smile and gain eye contact to promote trust and always show respect towards them.

Slide 17: How to support a person

You will need to ensure you are familiar with the many ways in which to support a person so that you are giving the correct level of support. You do not want to assume someone can do something that they can't and leave them in a situation where they are unable to eat. Nor do you want to let them become a high risk for choking or do something for someone that they are capable of doing for themselves as this could cause embarrassment or frustration. So if you need to take an active role to support the person by feeding them, let them try themselves first before you take over. If they can’t manage you must seek their permission as well. You may find that all they require from you is a supportive role where you encourage a person to do as much for themselves as they can and assist them when and if necessary. In the next slides I will explain in more detail what is an active or passive role.

Slide 18: How to take an active role

Taking an active role in supporting a person to eat means you will be doing one of 3 things. The first is when you will be need to feed the person. Now feeding a person is when you are putting the food in their mouth, ensuring the portion sizes are not too big to avoid choking. Assisting a person is where you are helping them to feed themselves. This means you may have to get the food on the spoon or to steady their arm to enable them to put the food in their mouth. It could be that you actively observe the person to ensure they are physically managing to chew and swallow the food to avoid choking. You will also be observing that they are eating enough to meet nutritional requirements and not becoming malnourished or under nourished through lack of nutrients.

Slide 19: Supportive Role

If your role is to be in a supportive capacity, it is likely that you will be doing things such as sitting with the person while they eat to keep them company. Having company may be all that is required to help them to feel relaxed and aid chewing and swallowing. You might be that you join them for a cup of tea to make the experience more social and positive for them. This type of experience may be more likely to stimulate them to eat and drink. You may be involved in ensuring the food looks appetizing. This is done by ensuring the food looks visually appealing. I'm sure you can think of times when you were served food that looked unappealing and before the food had touched your lips you determined it was not going to taste nice. You also would have had experiences of going into a restaurant and being presented with a plate of food that looked so good and you were keen to start eating it strait. This is what you can do for your clients. You can make the food look really appealing which will encourage them to want to eat. Talking to the person to find out how they are doing, what they like or don’t like might also help to decide any actions that need to take place for them to eat, if any. It might be something as simple as the sun being in their eyes distracting them and by adjusting the blinds or curtains will have them happily eating. So, making sure the environment is conducive to them eating and enjoying a meal is extremely important.

Slide 20: What is your role

This segment has highlighted the importance of knowing your clients so that you can best support them to eat. When you know your client, you can anticipate the barriers that they face to eating and drinking and alleviating them. These applies to both a temporary or permanent impairment. If food needs modifications or they need aids to help with eating, then observe the person and find ways to make eating easier and more enjoyable for them. Only then you will be able to provide the best care for your clients. The next segment will address further ways of managing feeding and eating.

# Segment 9 – How behaviour issues affect eating

Slide 1: Index

In the last segment I touched on a few different feeding issues, in this segment I will recap one of the issues, behaviour, and so will look at refusing to eat, distracted and disruptive behaviour and what your role is.

Slide 2: Reasons for behaviours around eating

There are different reasons that people will have eating and feeding issues. Sometimes these may be to dementia or a cognitive impairment. It may also be due to mental health, such a depression causing decreased appetite or loss of the desire to eat. So, it is important you understand there is a reason why people are not eating. It can be either physiological or psychological. There are many ways in which a person can show you they are unhappy.

Slide 3: How people refuse to eat

Some behavior issues are easy to observe, such as a person refusing to eat. This is where a person will not engage in any part of eating, they may refuse to eat by refusing to come to the dining room, they might say they are not hungry or do not want to eat, or they may simply sit at the table and not eat any food.

Slide 4 Why do people refuse to eat.

Refusing to eat as a one-off incident may be due to feeling unwell, it might be they do not like the food, or it might be they are in a bad mood and do not feel like being with other people. If a person is refusing to eat and this is unusual for them it is important to find out why. Once you know the reason why you may be able to find a solution. For example, if they do not like the meal you can find something else for them to eat. If they are in a bad mood, they might want to eat their meal at a different table or in their room. If they do not like to sit with other people, then arrange for them to have a quiet place to sit and eat. This could be their room or in another place in the building. Of course, there are times when a person may not be able to articulate why they do not want to eat. For this you may need to do a basic assessment such as seeing if they have an issue with their mouth or if they have a temperature indicating they are unwell.

Slide 5: Why people refuse to eat

For some people you might get them to the table, or be able to bring the meal, but they refuse to eat by not opening their mouth. This is the most common way for people who are being fed to refuse to eat. They may not like being fed. People may also simply hold the food in their mouth. This might be a sign they do not like the food or are struggling to swallow. It might also be a way for a person to take some power back in their situation if they are feeling frustrated.

Slide 6 Why do people refuse to eat.

A person might also decide to spit the food out. This is often due to not liking the texture or flavor of the food. It may be that they just do not like the people they are sitting with at the table. For instance, if the person can hold a decent conversation, and they are sat with people who cannot talk or talk a lot of rubbish, this can put them off their food. Maybe their starter motor has been affected and they have forgotten what to do? I have had several people with dementia like this. It is not that they are refusing to eat, but that they do not know how. Once you put the utensil in their hand and start them off, they are away.

Slide 7: What is your role

If a person is refusing to eat as a one off you can manage this, as previously stated, the ideal situation is to be able to find out the cause and resolve it. You will need to notify your manager or registered nurse and record the actual problem in their notes regarding this. Fix the problem if you know what it is, like shift to a more suitable table, or start them off by putting the utensil in their hand and show them what to do. Also, check the person’s current weight against their other weights to see if there has been any weight loss. This way you will be able to objectively identify how long it has been going on.

Slide 8 What steps do you need to take.

It may be that a person's preferences need to be updated in their personal plan so review them and update them if need be. It might be that a doctor needs to be called if there is concern the person is unwell so they may need a clinical assessment by the doctor or a speech language therapist if there are swallowing problems. Commence a food intake record. It is a more serious situation if there is persistent refusal to eat. This again needs to be discussed with the manager. It may be the family also need to get involved. If a person does not eat over a period of time it could lead to death. This may be the persons reason for refusing to eat, or they may be unaware of the consequences of their actions. If a person is refusing to eat, then a detailed plan needs to be in place. This will need to include doctor and family as well. It may be that a decision is made to just keep the person as comfortable as possible and encourage fluids, it may be that a transfer to hospital is the best solution. It will all depend on the persons reasons and their cognitive ability to understand the consequences of their decision.

Slide 8: How distracted behaviour affect eating

Besides refusing to eat there are other behaviors that effect the ability to feed a person or their ability to eat. These behaviors include wandering away from the table. The person may have forgotten what they were doing or how to do it like I mentioned in the last slide. It could be they may be confused, or maybe they had had enough food.

Slide 10 How distracted behaviour affects eating

Maybe they have had enough food and they want to leave the table. By making them sit back down at the table may really exacerbate the whole situation. Maybe supporting them to go and watch TV or to bed may be all that is required.

It could be that they need to go to the toilet and do not know how to tell you. By sitting them back down, and not attending to this need, may cause so much distress to the person they wet their pants. This can be very distressing for the person. Maybe they distracted from something else going on in the room, which is upsetting them, they just want to play with their food.

Just a note, when there are children who are labelled fussy eaters or maybe do not like the texture of some food, the way it is solved it to let them eat with their fingers. When you do this their feeding issues disappear. Now it may be a bit tricky to pick up something like this, so you must take note of how much a person is eating, what they are leaving on their plate or any other ques and put steps in place to ensure they get enough nourishment.

Slide 11: How disruptive behavior affects eating

Some people might also use disruptive behavior around mealtimes. For example, a person may be sitting in a common area and starts yelling, potentially at someone else or just yelling for no apparent reason. This can be distracting or distressing to others and impact on their ability to eat. The person yelling is also not eating. A person may also be disruptive by throwing food or objects. This is a clear sign they are unhappy or angry at something.

Again, if a person is in a common area and throwing their food or an object such as their cutlery this can impact on other people's ability to eat as well as their own, not to mention injure someone.

Eating another person's food might also be witnessed as well. This will be very upsetting for the person whose food is being eaten. Nor will you be able to assess how much the person has eaten for their nutritional records. All of these issues have the potential to escalate a situation in the facility with others joining in the fracas. It is essential that a calm environment is created for the safety and the enjoyment of others.

# Segment 10 - Identification of behaviours and strategies

Slide 1: Index

In this segment I will discuss how to assess a persons behaviour to identify why they are behaving the way they are and other factors that influence behaviour. I will also talk about general guidelines for managing behaviours and strategies to help avoid behaviours escalating.

Slide 2: How to identify the behaviors

As a support worker you will need to learn how to manage these behaviors. How you manage the behavior will depend on what the behavior is and why they are behaving this way.

When thinking about what the behavior is that a person is doing, you also need to think about the context it is in. You need to assess the situation to determine the best way of managing it. To do this you can use “What, where, when, how” and “why”.

Slide 3: What is the behaviour

You need to name the behaviour first. Once you have established what the behavior is that you think needs managing. This will enable you to not get caught in unnecessary detail. Be specific on what it is you want to manage. For example, are they refusing to eat by refusing to come to the dining room, or are they in the lounge and throwing food at people? These are both behaviors that impact the ability to eat but need quite different management strategies.

Slide 4: Where does the behaviour occur?

Next you then need to look at where they are when they display this behaviour? Are they in their room? Are they in the lounge? A person who is quietly refusing to eat will require a different approach to a person who is being loud and aggressive. Where the person is will also impact any safety concerns. Are they safe and are the people around them safe when they are doing the behavior? Observe and be very clear on where it is occurring.

Slide 5: When does this behaviour occur?

When is the person having a behavioral issue? Are they good at eating in the morning but leaving the table in the evening? This may give some clues as to how to manage it, it might be the person has dementia and is known to be someone who “Sundown’s” and wandering off from the table is part of this. Or is the person tired and grumpy in the morning because they did not have a good sleep? Does the person refuse to eat after they have received a visitor, or after others have had visitors but no one turned up to see them so look for patterns?

Slide 6: How do they behave

The ‘how’ of assessing a person's behavior would be is to look for any patterns or trends. How are they acting that is different to their normal self? Are they frequently aggressive and throwing food fits? Is this their normal behavior or are they acting out of character? It is also important to think about how they have responded previously to management strategies. Have you had to implement any strategies previously? Did they work? If you know the person has responded well to being redirected before then this could be a strategy to implement again, however if they have gone from just wandering to aggressive when someone has tried to redirect them then you know this may not be the strategy to implement if it will make the situation worse.

Slide 7: Why are they behaving like they are!

When you are assessing the “Why” a person is behaving the way they are, the answer may not be immediately apparent. It may take a bit of figuring out, or you might have a good idea why they are behaving this way based on things they have said. Have they been depressed lately and been making comments about being ready to die? Are they yelling about the food for example throwing the food because they “don't like mashed potato”? Have they been diagnosed with something that may also help with understanding what is going on? For example, if a person has been diagnosed with dementia and is wandering off, then you could understand that the two are likely linked. Is the person fighting an infection or in pain and not wanting to eat? Have they recently suffered some loss? If you know why the person is behaving the way, they are it will be help with the decisions on how best to manage the situation.

Slide 8: Other factors influence behaviour management

Your decision on how best to manage the situation will also be dependent on how confident you are in implementing various options. It will also be impacted by how well you know the person. For example, if you do not know the person very well and you are not confident then the best solution might be to get someone who does know the person well to manage the situation. You will also be guided by your organizations policies and procedures. Policies and procedures within organizations on how to manage behaviors will vary, some of this will be based on the size of the facility and staffing numbers, as well as how secure the facility is.

Slide 9: General guidelines for managing behaviours

While different people and organizations will have different approaches, policies, and procedures there are some general rules to follow. You should always be patient and understanding with the people you work with. This is regardless of how they are behaving. When a person is acting out it is easy to get caught up being reactionary, however you need to do the opposite. You need to be calm as well as patient. You also need to be respectful to people this includes respecting their likes and dislikes. Just because you like a certain food does not mean everyone should. A person is more likely to refuse to eat or become upset if served food they do not like. A part of being respectful is listening to their needs. Behaviors can often be sorted before they escalate if a person feels heard. If someone has said to you “I don’t feel like being around people today” and you have ignored them and walked them into the lounge they are more likely to refuse to eat or behave in a way that demonstrates their frustration.

Slide 10: Strategies to avoid escalating behaviours

The following are some ideas that you can use to help reduce the risk of a behavioral issues or stop behaviors from escalating. Now you cannot avoid all issues, but you can implement these strategies to help. Many of these strategies are implemented in day-to-day care and are not things to only try and implement if a situation is beginning to occur. The first thing is to know the person, communicate clearly and build a trusting relationship. If you have an established relationship with a person, they are more likely to talk to you as they know they can trust you and that you will respect them. Building trust with a person makes understanding the “why” of a behaviour easier. For example, if you have built up a relationship with a person you are more likely to pick up feelings of depression or the person being unwell and can implement a plan before they get to the point of refusing to eat. You can also pre plan by limiting the number of distractions in a room. For example, where possible have the dining room separate to the TV room, or have the TV turned off during mealtimes. This will help reduce people wandering off or not eating because they are distracted. It will also decrease the number of stimuli in the room which can also reduce the risk of aggressive behavior.

Slide 11: Strategies to avoid escalating behaviours

It can help people, particularly with dementia, if they are seated at a table to eat with unnecessary utensils removed to avoid confusion. This helps create the right atmosphere and give them unconscious cues to eat. If a person is not sitting comfortably or is overwhelmed with utensils, then they are more likely to not eat or wander off. You can also use verbal cues to keep people focused such as reminding them to pick up their fork, or to take a bite, you could also use verbal cues such as asking questions about the food to prompt them to eat.

You can also reduce the chances of people refusing to eat or being unable to eat if you ensure they have what they need in place. This means ensuring they have their dentures and are fitting correctly; they have their glasses and hearing aids in place. It also means that they have any special utensils available, particularly for clients with mobility issues such as arthritis. Also, it pays to make sure any clothing protectors such as napkins are in place.

Slide 12: Strategies to avoid escalating behaviours

It also helps to ensure the food is appealing this means looking and smelling good as these senses will increase or decrease the likelihood of a person eating. You can provide a variety of foods this way if a person does not love one of the foods on the plate there will be other options and therefore increase the likelihood they will eat. Check the temperature of the food if the food is too hot or too cold the person will not be able to eat it. Most importantly be patient give the person time to eat their food.

So, as you can see there are behavioral issues that can impact the person's ability to eat, but there are also solutions to help prevent, reduce, or avoid many of the behaviors. Importantly, you need to discuss any concerns with your manager about a person's food intake. The next segment will look at adaptive cutlery that can be used to support people with eating.

# Segment 11 – Using adaptive strategies to support eating and drinking

Slide 1: Index

In this segment I will discuss different strategies to support eating and drinking. These will come in two categories. The first being different types of adaptive equipment and how they can be used to best support someone. The second being your role in supporting a person to eat and drink.

Slide 2: When a person might need adaptive cutlery

If a person is struggling to use normal cutlery they might benefit from adaptive cutlery. This is often because there is muscle weakness or pain in their hands that hinders them from using regular cutlery. This might be a temporary issue due to injury or a long-term option for someone with a chronic condition such as arthritis.

Slide 3: Why use adaptive cutlery

If a person finds using regular utensils too difficult or painful this will hinder their ability to eat. Either they will not be able to use the utensil at all or not for long, either way a person would generally not be able to eat as much as they normally would if they were finding eating comfortable and pain free. Using adaptive equipment also helps a person maintain independence for longer. If a person can still feed themselves with adaptive equipment this is the best option as it allows the person to feel a sense of autonomy and independence as well as not tying up staffing resources with staff needing to feed more people.

Slide 4: What are adaptive utensils

Adaptive utensils are any tools used to prepare food or tools used to eat food that have been modified to make the use of the utensil easier. For example, a tool used to prepare food such as a peeler might have a wider grip handle. Sometimes automatic products are brought in to replace hand-held ones such as an automatic bottle, can or jar opener. Utensils such as knives, forks and spoons can be modified to make it easier to use as well. They can often have a wider handle as the most common need for adaptive equipment is needing a wider handle to be able to grip it. Sometimes simply switching out the knife and fork and ensuring the food is cut up and ready so a person can simply use a spoon is enough of a modification.

Slide 5: What are adaptive cups

Sometimes a person might need to have their cup modified to make it easier to drink. Some modifications will mean the person uses a sipper or spout to use, this can help decrease the use of spills. People who have an unsteady hand such as Parkinson's often find the use of a sipper much easier. Sometimes cups that have a large double handle are best for people to use to help maintain a grip on the cup. Sometimes there are also cups that have been specifically shaped to assist people who have difficulty breathing. Straws, especially those with a bend in them are also an option for people that find it difficult to bend their neck to drink.

Slide 6: What are adaptive Plates and Bowls

Plates and bowls might also need to be adapted to assist a person to remain independent while eating. Some can be weighted or have suction to help prevent them from being knocked over or shifting. For people that take time to get through their meal there are bowls that are insulated to keep the food warm and appealing. Sometimes plates are shaped to have a high edge or ‘lip’ to help prevent food spilling off the side. All these utensils and adaptions are designed to help a person maintain independence and some dignity around eating. While it may seem undignified to give a person a sippy cup, it might be the preferred option to having drink spilled all over themselves.

Slide 7: What is your role in supporting a person

Your role might be to support a person to ensure they can eat and drink safely. No matter what is going on for a person, they need to have sustenance in order to survive, it is the support persons role to ensure that this can be done safely and meeting the needs of the client. A personal plan should be written for each client. In this plan there should be notes about potential risks for the client, for example if they have dysphagia and are at risk of choking or aspirating. The personal plan should also include instructions on how to best support the person to minimize the risk. Communicate your observations in the persons notes or report to registered nurse any issues you notice.

Slide 8: How to minimize risk in bed

The instructions within the plan should include things like positioning. If a person needs to be positioned in a particular way in order to safely eat. For example, if a person is lying down, then their bed needs to be elevated to 30 degrees and have their head and neck supported to eat so that they do not run the risk of aspirating. If they are sitting in bed their torso and hips need to be at 90 degrees.

Slide 9 How to minimize risk sitting in a chair.

If they are sitting in a chair, then they need to have their feet flat on the floor with a 90-degree angle in their hips and knees. These positions are the best way to help minimizing the risk of choking while also ensuring they are able to eat.

Slide 10: How do you position yourself to support a person

When thinking about positioning you also need to think about where you are positioned. So, work out a position that is comfortable to you as well supporting the person and keeping both you and the person safe. You do not want to give yourself a back injury or be unsafe should the person become agitated. It is best to check your organization's policies and procedures around this to guide you to make the best decision. Each facility is set up differently and will have their own procedures and protocols and you need to ensure you understand the best way to complete this task in accordance with your facility.

Slide 11: What are the 3 R’s when providing food for a client

When assisting a person, you also need to ensure that the food is the correct consistency and temperature. You can increase the likelihood of choking if you are giving the wrong food. For example, if a person is on pureed diet it is likely because they have difficulty chewing and swallowing, therefore you would not be able to feed them a small broccoli head as this could cause them to choke. The food also needs to be at the right temperature, if it is too hot you run the risk of burning them, if it is too cold then it could be unappealing and initiate a gag reflex. You also need to ensure you are using the correct utensils for example if a person should be using a sippy cup to reduce the amount of water, they are getting at one time, you could cause them to choke if you use a cup and pour too much in their mouth at a time.

Slide 12: What techniques can be used to help a person eat and drink

A person made need assistance to manipulate their mouth around their food. If you need to be assisting with manipulating a mouth such as closing their lips or assisting with jaw stability, then you need to be adequately trained to do this. If you are not trained by a speech language therapist, you could inadvertently cause an injury to the person.

Slide 13: Building a relationship with the client

As with every aspect of support work, the more you know the client the better the job you can do for them. You need to ensure that you are treating the person with dignity and respect. Feeding a person or supporting them to eat involves you being in close proximity to them. This means there needs to be an element of trust and respect for this to be successful. You need to be able to communicate with them and for them to be able to communicate with you. They may not be able to verbally tell you that they do not like the food or that they are full, therefore you need to know them enough to understand what they are trying to tell you so look for any verbal or non-verbal cues they are giving you. You do not want to misread them and think they are telling you they are full when really, they do not like a particular flavor, and you end up leaving them hungry. You need to take their lead with eating and drinking. This means you need to go at their pace not yours.

Slide 14: What will the policies and procedures tell you

You need to ensure you have a good understanding of your organization's policies and procedures when it comes to supporting a person to eat and drink. You will need to know how and when to move to adaptive equipment as some may need to be specially brought in. You also need to know how to keep yourself and your client safe and comfortable when feeding them or supporting them to eat and drink. You also need to know how, when and what to document regarding a person's food intake, ability, and preferences. Some people might be strictly monitored with their food intake and you need to know how do document this. You also need to know who to report any concerns or changes that you have observed. It is really important to have a good understanding of the documents and reporting process so that you can do your job accurately and safely.

This is the end of this nutrition topic. We have covered what nutrition is, dietary requirement, how health and impairments impact on nutrition, and how nutrition impacts on health and wellbeing. We have also covered eating and feeding issues, adapting food, supporting people to eat and drink and adaptive aids. I hope that you now have a good understanding of how vital nutrition is to the wellbeing of the people you support and how you can adjust food to meet the needs of your clients. Please take the time to read the policies and procedures around food and nutrition in your workplace and ensure you know where to find nutrition information in a person's plan.