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References:
https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/nutritional-psychiatry-your-brain-on-food-201511168626 - accessed 6/21/2022


NC State-approved Curriculum Nurse Aide I Training Program July 2019 Module J Nutrition

https://info.ncdhhs.gov/dhsr/hcpr/curriculum/homecareaidecurriculum.html - module 14 Nutrition

**Objectives:**
- Define nutrition
- Review the importance of good nutrition
- Review age related changes affecting nutrition
- List dietary needs for a person with diabetes

**Nutrition**

Nutrition is the processes involved in the ingestion, digestion, absorption, and use of food and fluids by the body. Nutrition is when the body takes in and uses foods and fluids to maintain health. Food is a basic need, and a person's diet affects physical and mental well-being and function. A poor diet and poor eating habits increase the risk for disease and infection, cause chronic illnesses to become worse, and cause healing problems. Malnutrition is the lack of proper nutrition because of a lack of food intake, improper diet, or impaired use of food by the body. According to a Harvard Health Blog *Nutritional psychiatry: Your brain on food* - “your brain requires a constant supply of fuel. That "fuel" comes from the foods you eat - and what’s in that fuel makes all the difference. Put simply, what you eat directly affects the structure and function of your brain and, ultimately, your mood.”

**USDA’s MyPlate:**
- Developed by the U.S. Department of Agriculture
- It recommends balancing the intake of healthy food choices and physical activity
- Designed to help people easily build a healthy plate during meal times
- Shows the amounts of each food group that should be on a person’s plate during meals
- Emphasizes vegetables, fruits, grains, protein, and low-fat dairy
- Think about halves – make half your plate fruits and vegetables; and make half your grains whole grains
- Advocates drinking water instead of sugary drinks
- Replaces the MyPyramid

**USDA My Plate- Start Simple with MyPlate**

The benefits of healthy eating add up over time, bite by bite. Small changes matter. *Start Simple with MyPlate.*

A healthy eating routine is important at every stage of life and can have positive effects that add up over time. It’s important to eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, grains, protein foods, and dairy and fortified soy alternatives. When deciding what to eat or drink, choose options that are full of nutrients. Make every bite count. Download the Start Simple with MyPlate mini-poster in **English** or **Spanish**.

Nutrition Facts Label are a simple tool from the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) found on all packaged foods and beverages and serves as a guide for making choices that can affect health.
NUTRITION

For the human body to continue to grow normal cells, maintain normal functioning of all systems, and have energy for activities, a well-balanced diet is needed. It is important to remember that each person is unique. Each client is different and cannot be compared to other clients of the same age or condition. Nutritional status is based on a person’s body composition, functional status, and the presence of illness or disease and is unique to each person.

**Good Nutrition – Importance**

- Promotes physical and mental health
- Increases resistance to illness
- Produces energy and vitality
- Aids in healing
- Assists one to feel and sleep better
- Helps avoid or manage common diseases such as:
  - Certain cancers
  - Diabetes
  - Heart disease
  - High blood pressure
  - Obesity
  - Osteoporosis

- If your client has had a stroke, it may be difficult for them to swallow liquids. You may have to thicken their liquids before consumption. You will need special instruction from your supervisor as to the amount of thickener needed. There are various degrees of thickener.

**Good Nutrition – Characteristics**

- Well-developed, healthy body, at the appropriate weight
- Alert facial expression
- Healthy, shiny hair
- Clear skin and bright eyes
- Healthy appetite
- Regular elimination habits
- Restful sleep patterns

**Poor Nutrition – Characteristics**

- Changes in weight
- Poor skin color and appearance
- Dull looking hair, eyes, and skin
- Irregular elimination habits
- Poor sleep patterns
- Abnormal conditions, such as osteoporosis or anemia
- Tired

**Age Related Changes Affecting Nutrition**

- Need for fewer calories
- Vitamin and mineral requirements change
- Drugs may affect how nutrients are absorbed and used
- Teeth/dentures affect ability to chew food
- Saliva and gastric juices decrease
- Appetite and thirst decrease
- Constipation may occur
- Taste and smell diminish
- May require assistance with nutritional needs including food preparation and eating.

If the client’s plan of care includes assistance with eating or feeding a client, be sure to receive education from your supervisor on how to safely assist a client with eating. Follow the client’s plan of care regarding preparing food or assisting a client to eat. Report per the plan of care any problems with your clients with eating food or drinking liquids or any difficulty with swallowing. Good nutrition is vital in the overall health of the individual. In-home aides are vital in assisting a client with nutritional needs.

If you are preparing food, *food safety* is particularly important to protect yourself and your client from harmful germs. You can view this food safety music video-*Don't Get Sicky Wit It* – Animation, at this link: [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbH_mSk2dNk&feature=relmfu](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZbH_mSk2dNk&feature=relmfu)
A mechanically altered diet requires a change in the texture of food or liquids (e.g., soft solids, ground meat, pureed food or thickened liquids). A therapeutic diet or modified diet is a specific diet ordered for a person because of illness, condition, or preparation for a procedure (e.g., low cholesterol, low sodium (salt)). Follow the client’s plan of care for any type of therapeutic diet requirements, be sure to ask your supervisor for any education for requirements for any therapeutic or modified diet. According to the American Diabetes Association everyone’s body responds differently to different types of foods and diets, so there is no single "magic" diet for diabetes. But a person can follow a few simple guidelines to find out what works for them to help manage their blood sugar. One of the key takeaways is that many different eating patterns can help a person manage their diabetes—from Mediterranean to low-carbohydrate to vegetarian. Whatever a person chooses, they should be sure to include lots of non-starchy vegetables, minimize added sugars and refined grains, and choose whole, minimally processed foods. Learn more Key Takeaways from ADA’s Nutrition Consensus Report at: https://www.diabetes.org/sites/default/files/2019-10/ADV_2019_Consumer_Nutrition_One%20Pager.pdf

### Examples of non-starchy vegetables
- Asparagus
- Broccoli or Cauliflower
- Brussels Sprouts
- Cabbage (green, red, napa, bok choy, chinese)
- Carrots
- Celery
- Cucumber
- Eggplant
- Leafy greens such as kale, collards, mustard greens, or Swiss Chard
- Mushrooms
- Okra
- Green beans, pea pods, snow peas, and sugar snap peas
- Peppers such as bell peppers and hot peppers
- Salad greens such as lettuce, spinach, arugula, endive, and other salad mixes
- Squash such as zucchini, yellow squash, chayote, spaghetti squash
- Tomatoes

### Examples of lean protein foods
- Chicken, turkey, and eggs
- Fish like salmon, cod, tuna, tilapia, or swordfish
- Shellfish like shrimp, scallops, clams, mussels, or lobster
- Lean beef cuts such as chuck, round, sirloin, flank, or tenderloin
- Lean pork cuts such as center loin chop or tenderloin
- Lean deli meats
- Cheese and cottage cheese

### Plant-based sources of protein:
- Beans, lentils, hummus, and falafel
- Nuts and nut butters. Edamame, Tofu and tempeh, Plant-based meat substitutes

### Vitamins and Nutrients
- Vitamins – a nutrient that helps the body function normally; body gets majority of vitamins from certain foods; examples are Vitamins A and C
- Nutrients – substance found in food and fluids that are used by body for growth and maintenance of health

#### Six Nutrients
- **Water** – the most essential nutrient for life
- **Fats** – help the body store energy
- **Carbohydrates** – supply the body with energy and extra protein
- **Protein** – essential for tissue growth and repair and supply the body with energy
- **Vitamins** – needed by the body to function
- **Minerals** – help build bones, make hormones, and help in blood formation.

### Key Concepts
- Nonstarchy vegetables are lower in carbohydrate, so they do not raise blood sugar very much. They are also high in vitamins, minerals, and fiber, making them an important part of a healthy diet. Filling half your plate with nonstarchy vegetables means you will get plenty of servings of these superfoods.
- Foods high in protein such as fish, chicken, lean beef, soy products, and cheese are all considered “protein foods.” Proteins foods (especially those from animal sources) usually contain saturated fat, which may increase a person’s risk of heart disease. Lean proteins are lower in fat and saturated fat, making them a healthier choice. Some plant-based protein foods (like beans and legumes) are also high in carbohydrates.

You can assist your clients and provide encouragement to follow any nutritional guidelines they have been prescribed by their health care provider for their diabetes management.