



Tips for Supporting Nutrition and Hydration

Proper nutrition and hydration are essential for people with dementia, supporting brain function, health, and quality of life.

1. **Create a Calm Mealtime Environment:** Serve meals in a quiet, well-lit space with minimal distractions. Keep table settings simple and uncluttered.
2. **Encourage Participation and Independence:** Allow the person to help with setting the table or choosing meals and provide gentle assistance as needed.
3. **Offer Nutritious, Appealing Foods:** Provide a balanced diet with fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean proteins. If appetite is low, offer small, frequent meals and high-calorie snacks.
4. **Monitor Swallowing and Food Texture:** Watch for signs of difficulty swallowing (e.g., coughing, pocketing food in the cheeks of the mouth).
5. **Promote Regular Hydration:** Offer drinks frequently – even if the person doesn't ask.
6. **Screen for Malnutrition and Dehydration:** Monitor weight, appetite, and energy levels regularly and involve healthcare professionals in routine screenings.

LONG TERM CARE COMMUNITY COALITION

Advancing Quality, Dignity & Justice

This Dementia Care Card is part of a toolkit of resources to help improve care for individuals living with dementia. For more detailed information on this topic and other useful resources, visit www.nursinghome411.org/dementia-care-in-the-community.

Visit www.NursingHome411.org for...

- Dementia care resources,
- Fact sheets on nursing home resident rights,
- Information on nursing home staffing & quality,
- Assisted living guides,
- Family empowerment resources,
- Educational webinars,
- And much more!

All resources are free to use and share.