


Where Can I Get Something to Eat? How the Activities Team Can Support Nutritional Needs for Persons Living with Dementia



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Objectives:

- ▶ 1. Understand how dementia impacts food intake.
- ▶ 2. Understand how nutrition challenges change as dementia progresses.
- ▶ 3. Explain the role the Activities department plays in improving quality of care for individuals living with dementia.
- ▶ 4. List simple dining environment, food related activities and mealtime strategies that can help improve overall food acceptance.

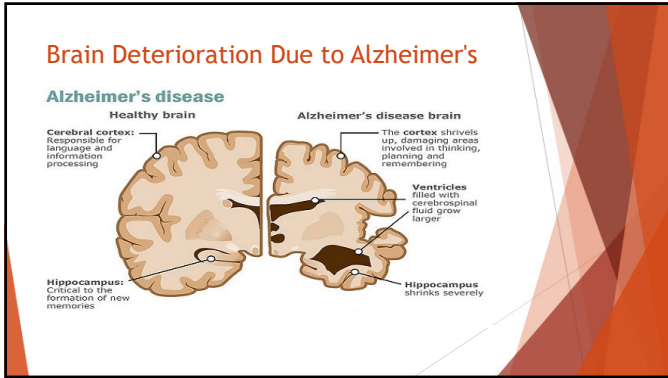
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Alzheimer's Disease Statistics

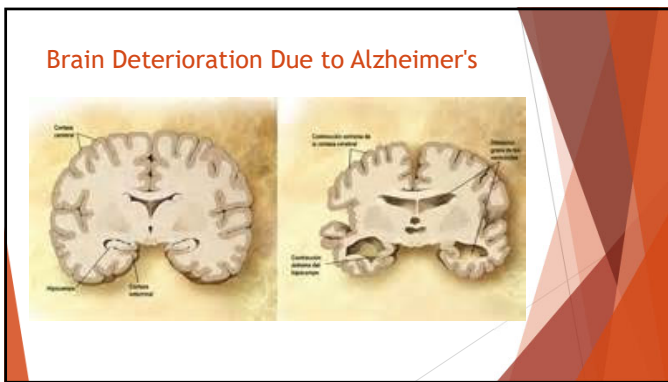
- Approximately 7.2 million Americans 65 and older are living with Alzheimer's Disease in 2024. It is estimated that 73% of those affected are age 75 or older
- 1 in 3 older adults dies with Alzheimer's or other dementias (it kills more than breast cancer and prostate cancer combined)
- Alzheimer's Disease is the 7th leading cause of death in the United States
- Almost two-thirds of Americans with Alzheimer's are women
- In 2025, Alzheimer's and other dementias will cost the nation \$384 Billion
- Nearly 12 million Americans provide unpaid care for people with Alzheimer's or other dementias
- By 2060, it is estimated that 13.8 million Americans over 65 years of age will develop Alzheimer's disease.



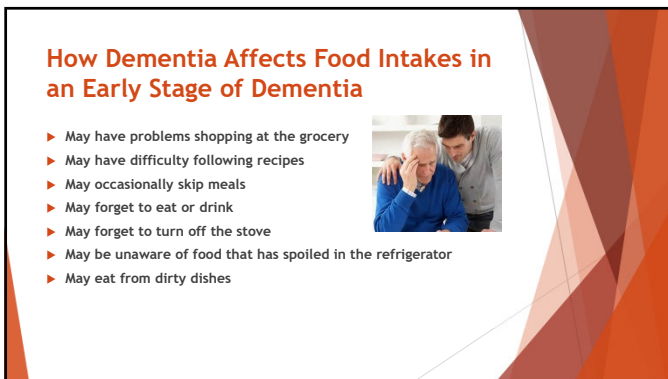
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How Dementia Affects Food Intakes in a Moderate Stage of Dementia


- ▶ Short attention span and easily distracted
- ▶ Inconsistent eating patterns:
 - ▶ 1. Overeating - does not recognize sense of fullness
 - ▶ 2. Forgetting to eat or drink at all
 - ▶ 3. Forgetting they just ate a meal a short time ago
- ▶ Confusion regarding use of silverware
- ▶ Confusion regarding how to eat a specific food/lack of table manners



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How Dementia Affects Food Intakes in an Advanced Stage of Dementia

- ▶ Difficulty chewing
- ▶ May experience difficulty in swallowing: pocketing; late stages, food or fluids run out of mouth
- ▶ May not recognize food or what to do with it
- ▶ May lose weight if not eating properly
- ▶ May become dehydrated due to lack of adequate fluid intakes



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Other Factors that may influence Nutritional Status

- ▶ Decreased perception of smell and taste
- ▶ Medications that may alter taste
- ▶ Decline in physical abilities
- ▶ Depression
- ▶ Adapting to a new environment:
 - ▶ 1. Change in environment (Assisted Living/Skilled Nursing)
 - ▶ 2. Addition of new people in their life (Caregivers)



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Potential Negative Health Outcomes Associated with Memory Impairment



- ▶ Forgetting to turn off the stove or not using oven mitts to get food out of the oven could lead to physical injury to self and/or others.
- ▶ Eating food that was not properly stored or that has spoiled could lead to possible food borne illness.
- ▶ Forgetting to eat may result in undesired weight loss.
- ▶ Inadequate fluid intakes may result in dehydration.

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Potential Negative Health Outcomes Associated with Memory Impairment

- ▶ Frequent movements or increased activity (such as pacing or walking the neighborhood) burns excess calories and could lead to undesired weight loss
- ▶ Inability to sit through meals due to easily distracted can lead to inadequate food intakes and resulting in undesired weight loss.
- ▶ Dislike of and choosing not to eat mechanically altered foods could result in weight loss.
- ▶ May not remember what to do with silverware - may lead to decreased intakes and weight loss



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The Role of the Activities Team



- ▶ Knowing the individual (resident) is the key. A detailed initial assessment is the place to start.
- ▶ Communicating resident preferences for engagement including snacks, meals and eating patterns to all team members is crucial.
- ▶ Education of all team members

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Know the Person

How well do you Know Your Residents?

- ▶ Likes/dislikes
- ▶ Family history
- ▶ Past education and vocation
- ▶ Favorite hobbies
- ▶ Preferred music
- ▶ Preferred bedtime and wake time
- ▶ Pets
- ▶ Comfort Foods
- ▶ Favorite beverages/desserts
- ▶ Usual breakfast preferences
- ▶ Special food preferences when not feeling well
- ▶ Eating patterns per history

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Meal Time Strategies



- ▶ Based on individual assessment, it may be best to serve one food at a time during the meal.
- ▶ For some residents they eat better when they are with one staff member in a more calm, quiet and private dining setting.

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Mealtime Strategies




- ▶ For some residents, serving one food at a time is less overwhelming than a full plate of food.
- ▶ Adaptive utensils and plates may assist with independence with eating.

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Mealtime Strategies

- ▶ Evaluate your mechanically altered diets.
- ▶ Pureed foods are often unappealing.

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Dining Environment

- ▶ Reduce clutter on the dining room tables.
- ▶ Use sturdy chairs and tables in dining room settings and family kitchens.
- ▶ Turn off the TV.
- ▶ Play soft soothing music in the background.
- ▶ Avoid plates with distracting patterns.

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Dining Environment

- ▶ Serve food on colored plates. Studies show resident meal intakes increase 25% when eaten from colored plates.
- ▶ Use placemats or nice vinyl tablecloths which offer a contrast from plates.
- ▶ Avoid patterned tablecloths or placemats

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New Dining Practice Standards
Individualized Real Food First



AND Recommends:
 Create meals comparable to those eaten at home; offer wide range of choices and seek input from residents, family and staff.

CMS:
 With any nutrition program, improving intake from wholesome foods is generally preferable to adding nutritional supplements.

Recommendations:

- Real food before supplements
- Fresh produce is encouraged including produce from resident gardens
- The dining experience should be as natural as possible as if eating at home
- Resident satisfaction with the quality of food and the dining experience should be a home's priority

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United Church Homes Fortified Foods



Real Food First options

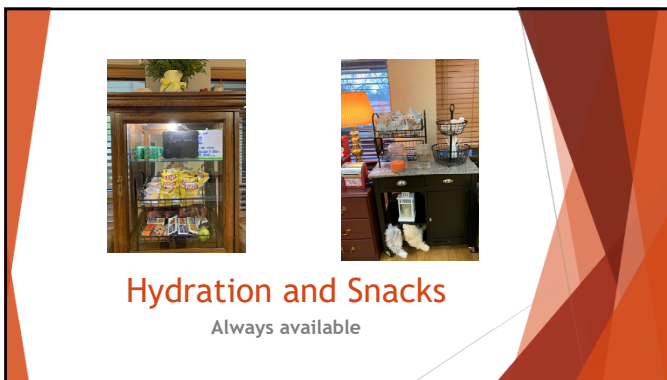
- ▶ Fortified Cereal
- ▶ Fortified Mashed Potatoes
- ▶ Fortified Pudding
- ▶ Fortified Soups
- ▶ Yogurt Parfait
- ▶ Homemade Milkshakes



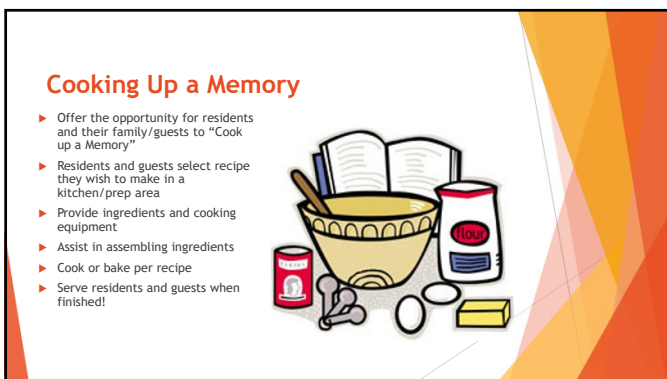
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Cooking Up a Memory

Menu ideas include:

- ▶ Favorite family recipes
- ▶ Birthday celebration
- ▶ Holiday favorites
- ▶ Bring on dessert!




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Music and Memory


Nationally recognized program that transforms the treatment and care of people living with Dementia/Alzheimer's disease, cognitive decline, Physical limitations and ongoing health concerns

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Effective Communication Tips:

- Greeting: Offer a friendly greeting to everyone with a smile. Remember to make eye contact when speaking with residents, families, guests and co-workers.
- Introduction: Introduce yourself and ask how you may be of service. Always wear your name badge and make sure it is visible. Be polite, professional and respectful at all times.
- Facial expressions: Smiles elicit feelings of warmth and caring making residents, families and guests more comfortable and willing to share openly. Avoid rolling eyes or yawning when talking with others.




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Effective Communication Tips:

- **Body language:** Be aware of your body language whether sitting or standing when in conversation with others. Example: Sitting or standing with your arms crossed can give the impression you do not care, you are bored, you do not have time. Be mindful of your posture at all times.
- **Vocal tone:** Speak in a pleasant tone of voice and be mindful of the volume in which you speak. Be mindful of words used to avoid causing unintended insult.




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The UCH Word of the Week

Old versus New

- Facility = Community
- Patient = Resident or Community member
- Unit/Wing = Neighborhood
- Elderly = Older adults
- Person Centered Care = Person Directed Care
- Confused = Trouble Thinking; Living in the past
- Dementia resident = A Person/Resident Living with Dementia
- Locked = Secured
- Refusal = Decline, not interested, your decision to make
- Noncompliant = Person makes own choices



Words have power.
Be careful how
You use them

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Resources

- ▶ Alzheimer's Association (www.alz.org)
- ▶ www.alzheimers.org.uk
- ▶ <http://www.alzheimersreadingroom.com/2010/08/what-color-is-your-plate.html>
- ▶ Today's Dietitian, "Caring for Dementia Patients" Vol. 15 No. 8 P. 64
- ▶ www.caring.com/articles/alzheimers-eating-problems
- ▶ A Planning Guide for Dementia Care at Home: A Reference Tool for Care Manager; Wisconsin Alzheimer's Institute and Wisconsin Bureau of Aging and Long Term Care Resources
- ▶ Pioneer Network: Dining Practice Standards

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QUESTIONS?



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