

TOPIC: NUTRITION AND HYDRATION

1. **Nutrition is the process by which the body takes in food to maintain health.** Good nutrition is important because it promotes physical and mental health, increases energy level and resistance to illness, and aids in the healing process. **A balanced diet is necessary for good nutrition and health.**

- a. **Nutrients include:** 1) **Carbohydrates** – provide energy and fiber. 2) **Proteins** – promote growth and repair of tissue. 3) **Fats** – help the body use certain vitamins; provide a concentrated form of energy. 4) **Vitamins** – help the body function. 5) **Minerals** – build body tissue, regulate body fluids, promote bone and tooth formation, affect nerve and muscle function.
- b. The energy potential of food is measured in calories. The amount of calories needed depends on age, illness, activity, climate, and sleep. More calories are needed if a client has an illness, infection, or pressure sore. **Individual food choices are affected by:** 1) **Culture** – dietary content and cooking methods differ greatly throughout the world. 2) **Religion** – some religions have food restrictions and periods of fasting. 3) **Illness** – pain, medication, and treatment such as chemotherapy affect the ability to eat. 4) **Finances** – a limited food budget influences the types of foods in a person's diet. 5) **Personal preferences** – everyone has likes and dislikes.
- c. Most clients are on a basic diet. Some clients need special diets, which may:
1) **Restrict**, eliminate or change the proportions of specific foods (sodium restricted, low fat, low cholesterol, diabetic). 2) **Be modified in consistency** (clear liquids, full liquids, pureed, mechanical soft).
- d. When serving food, the LNA should: 1) Prepare the dining area by being certain it is clean and free of unpleasant odors. 2) Assist client with elimination before the meal. Incontinent clients should be clean and dry. 3) Assist client with oral hygiene needs and handwashing. 4) Position client for comfort and safety. 5) Be certain that hot foods are not too hot to eat. Stir hot foods to cool them. 6) Allow client time to pray before the meal, if they wish, to show respect and caring. 7) Encourage client to do as much as possible for themselves. Offer to help cut meats, open packages and pour liquids. 8) Assist client with visual impairment by using the numbers on a clock to describe location of the foods on the plate.
- e. **When feeding residents who cannot feed themselves** because of weakness, paralysis, casts, or confusion: 1) Sit at eye level with the resident. 2) Protect resident's clothing with covering. 3) Identify the food with each bite. 4) Feed slowly and in small amounts to prevent choking and aspiration. 5) Place spoon on unaffected side of mouth. 6) Offer fluids at regular intervals. 7) Be patient,

empathetic and encouraging. 8) Record food intake in notes/charting.

f. **Supplements and in-between meal snacks** increase protein and calories and can be ordered mid morning, mid afternoon and at bedtime for some clients.

2. **Approximately 2000-2500cc of fluid should** be taken into the body each day (liquids include water and some foods like gelatin, soup, and ice cream). Approximately the same amount of fluid should be excreted from the body through urine, feces, lungs (breathing) and skin (perspiration). This is called “fluid balance”.

a. Intake and Output (I&O) is the measurement of the amount of fluid the client takes into the body and the amount of fluid leaving the body 1) Determine the client’s total fluid intake. Include liquids taken with meals and between meals and foods which are considered liquid (gelatin, soup, ice cream). 2) Use metric measurements. 1 oz = 30cc. 3) Use a graduated measuring container to measure output including urine and emesis. 4) Record results immediately

b. Understand that: 1) Fluid requirements change in hot weather, with exercise, fever and illness. 2) The elderly may have a decreased sense of thirst. 3) Some clients will have special orders to restrict fluids especially in case of a heart condition but refer questions about this issue to the office.

4. **LNA’s role:** Encourage the client to eat as much of the meal as possible. Note the foods the client avoids and try to provide an alternative.

a. Be patient when feeding or assisting the client to eat. Create a positive environment during meals. Encourage socialization during meals.

b. Offer fluids to the client throughout the day, especially between breakfast and dinnertime as pushing fluids at night often means more trips to the bathroom at night. Measure Intake and Output (if catheterized) accurately and chart.

ADDITIONAL DEFINITIONS:

Nutrient - chemical substances contained in food **Basic Diet** - a regular or general well balanced diet **Special Diet** – therapeutic or modified

Aspiration – inhaling a foreign object or substance (food, liquids)

Supplement – to add