

# FOOD & NUTRITION INSERVICE

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## NUTRITION & HYDRATION FOR OLDER ADULTS



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This inservice is designed to be used as a tool to train staff in long-term care facilities. Although we have provided an outline of the topic at hand, you may need to prepare in advance and tailor this inservice to your staff.

Consider the following:

- Employees' experience and knowledge levels
- Areas needing reinforcement
- Facility policy and state regulations relevant to this topic

To increase employee engagement and retention of information, incorporate thought-provoking questions, ask for examples, and have employees read aloud the handouts, if applicable.

## INSERVICE OBJECTIVES

This training addresses the role of proper nutrition and hydration in maintaining older adults' strength and health in long-term care facilities. Following the completion of this training, employees will be able to:

1. State the risk factors for poor nutrition and inadequate hydration in older adults
2. Name three complications of malnutrition
3. Identify interventions to prevent poor nutrition and inadequate hydration

Main Topics to Cover Are:

- Natural Consequences of Aging
- Interventions to Prevent Poor Nutrition
- Dehydration Risks
- Signs and Symptoms of Dehydration
- Interventions to Prevent Dehydration

# INSERVICE OUTLINE

## Pre-Test

*Ask participants to complete the pre-test on page 7. These questions will be re-visited at the end of the training.*

## Lecture & Discussion

### Natural Consequences of Aging

Meeting the nutrition and hydration needs of residents is one of the most important things you can do to help them maintain strength and good health.

Unfortunately, meeting those needs can be difficult resulting from the natural consequences of aging.

*Provide and discuss Natural Consequences of Aging Handout on page 6.*

Natural consequences of aging include:

- **Poor oral health.** Missing teeth, ill-fitting dentures, cavities or infections, can cause difficulty eating and lead to inadequate nutrition intake.
- **Reduced gastrointestinal function.** Older adults produce less gastric acid, intrinsic factor and other enzymes like pepsin, which reduces the absorption of nutrients such as vitamins B6, B12, folate, iron, and calcium.
- **Cognitive impairment.** While some cognitive decline is expected with age, more progressive forms of cognitive impairment such as Alzheimer's disease can affect the ability to perform daily living activities – especially eating.
- **Polypharmacy.** The use of multiple medications concurrently to manage health problems such as diabetes or cancer is common among older adults. Drugs can cause loss of appetite, nausea, diarrhea, constipation, dry mouth and alter taste and smell.

Collectively, these changes and factors can result in unintended weight loss and malnutrition, which can lead to several complications.