

EATING FOR OLDER ADULTS

Dietitian

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Outline

- Energy and protein deficit
- Potential vitamins and minerals deficiency
- Fluid requirement
- Dietitian's tips
- Asian older adults
- Questions?

Energy

↓ energy requirements with age due to:

↓ physical activity

↓ muscle mass

Many older people overcompensate due to ↓ appetite

Protein

- Protein synthesis less efficient in older people
- ↑ protein requirements
 - 1.0 - 1.2 g/kg in healthy aged
 - 1.5 g/ kg in malnourished

Vitamin B12



B12 deficiency common due to:

- ↓ absorption (Atrophic gastritis, long term PPIs)
- ↓ intake

Vit B12 deficiency can lead to:

- ↓ mental functioning
- Impaired balance and coordination.
- A prolonged, severe deficiency of B12 can cause irreversible nerve damage.

- To screen and monitor regularly

Vitamin D

- People over age of 50 have an increased risk of vitamin D deficiency:
 - Lose some of the ability to synthesize from sunlight
 - Kidney function reduces with age and vitamins D needs to be activated in the kidney
 - Older people are more likely home bound so spend less time outdoor

Iron

- Anaemia is most frequent in older age, potentially affect 17% of the population over the age of 65 years old
- This is likely due to decreased oral intake, other vitamin deficiencies such as vitamin B12 or Vitamin B9 which may affect iron absorption
- Malabsorption
- Medication
- H. Pylori infection
- Chronic diseases such as ulcers, cancers, GI disease

Fluid

↓ sense of thirst

↑ risk of dehydration

Aiming for 30-40mls/kg/day



Nutritional Recommendations

- Smaller, energy dense meals
- Snacks
- Use blue top milk
- Add extra healthy fat
- Protein rich food in every main meal, at least 3x per day
- Encourage fluids such as water, diluted juice, non-caffeinated tea or coffee
- Encourage more outdoor time and 30 minutes of sunshine 2-3x per week
- Cod liver oil, salmon, tuna, egg yolk and cheese are good sources of vitamin D
- Vitamin B₁₂ can be found in animal products such as beef, chicken, fish and dairy

Nutritional Supplements

- Standard 1kcal/ml, nutritionally complete: Ensure powder, Sustagen powder. Complan or Vitaplan also good choices if not qualify for SA#
- Standard 1.5kcal/ml, nutritionally complete: Fortisip, Fortisip Multifibre, Ensure Plus
- Special supplement:
 - Diasips –diabetic version of Fortisip but less in protein. Fully subsidised
 - Calogen – 4.5kcal/ml, fat supplement, energy dense, dairy free
 - Ensure 2Cal HN -2cal/ml, nutritionally complete
 - Fortijuice –dairy free, nutritionally complete
 - Fortisip protein compact –available in hospitals (under H schedule) but not funded in the community.
 - Polycal, Protifar, Beneprotein

Older adults with Asian background

- Prone to muscle wasting due to slimmer build
- Follows instructions to the letters
- Prefers hot food/snacks
- Ice-cream, yoghurt, dairyfood, custard are never good protein rich snack ideas for them
- Not used to have morning tea or afternoon tea so will need some persuading to increase meal frequency
- Believe that chicken bone soups, rice congee are good meal options when unwell
- Finds sweet, milky drinks harder to tolerate
- Calogen, 2CalHN, Fortisip protein compact may be a good alternative to suggest

QUESTIONS??
