



**melbourne
dietetic
centre**

Circulation List

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Facility Manager | <input type="checkbox"/> Catering Manager |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Catering Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Clinical Manager |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Clinical Staff | <input type="checkbox"/> Care Staff |

Nutrition Matters

March 2010

Hello and welcome to Nutrition Matters produced by the Melbourne Dietetic Centre for Aged Care Facilities, to support optimal nutrition practices. The professional dietitians at the Melbourne Dietetic Centre compile the nutrition insights offered in this newsletter.

In this issue we look at nutrition in prevention and management of bowel issues.

Taming the Bowels – Managing Constipation and Diarrhoea with Diet

Altered bowel habits, constipation and diarrhoea are common, particularly in the aged care environment. To keep bowels healthy, individuals need plenty of fibre, adequate fluids and they need to be active. In the aged care environment most residents have reduced mobility and have the added complication of possible medication side-effects: therefore focusing on diet to control bowels is essential.

What is constipation?

Constipation refers to infrequent passing of stools, possibly combined with excess straining. Normal bowel function is different for everyone: the key to diagnosing constipation is monitoring a resident's usual habits and detecting abnormal patterns or several days without bowel movements.

Common symptoms of constipation include:

- Straining
- Incomplete evacuation
- Abdominal bloating/distension
- Hard or lumpy stools
- Unproductive calls to stool
- Infrequent stools

What is diarrhoea?

Diarrhoea occurs when fecal matter passes very frequently through the bowel or where stools are poorly formed or liquid in consistency. When bowels are watery, excess fluid and electrolytes are expelled from the body leaving residents at high risk of dehydration. Diarrhoea can cause sharp abdominal pains, the feeling of urgency and incontinence.

Diarrhoea can be acute, lasting 24-48 hours or it may persist for weeks or months. Acute diarrhoea is usually infectious and can be caused by gastroenteritis or food poisoning. In such cases, facilities should follow in-house gastroenteritis guidelines, and provide residents with a bland, non-irritating diet together with adequate fluids.

Persistent diarrhoea requires medical investigation as it may result from conditions such as coeliac disease, irritable bowel syndrome, diverticular disease, microscopic colitis or bowel cancer. These conditions should be excluded before investigating dietary changes.



Taming the Bowels – Managing Constipation and Diarrhoea with Diet Cont...

Maintaining Healthy Bowels

To maintain and promote good bowel health, adults require 30g of fibre daily. This comes from a variety of foods, including soluble fibres that help slow absorption of fats and glucose; insoluble fibres that provide dietary roughage, increase stool bulk and increase the speed of intestinal transit; and resistant starches that are fermented in the large bowel adding to stool bulk and promoting bowel health.

To achieve the required 30g of fibre per day, residents require:

- 5 serves of breads and cereals (where possible wholegrain)
- 5 serves of vegetables, and
- 2 serves of fruit

If residents are unable to consume this amount of food then fibre supplements may be considered such as Benefibre or Metamucil (which can be added to foods or fluids).

1 serve of breads and cereals = 1 slice bread, ½ cup pasta, ½ cup muesli, 1/3 cup rice

1 serve vegetables = ½ cup cooked vegetables or 1 cup salads

1 serve fruit = 1 medium fruit (eg apple) or two smaller fruits (eg apricots)

Hydration

All residents, unless on a fluid restriction, require a minimum of 1500ml fluid daily. Besides hydration, fluid helps form soft stools. To achieve 1500ml fluid, a resident should drink 1-2 cups at each meal and snack.

Tips to increase fluids:

- encourage residents to have a full glass of fluids with medications
- provide a cup of fluids (e.g. water, cordial) before each meal
- in hot weather consider an extra fluid round in addition to meals and snacks
- provide ice-blocks for residents with no dysphagia
- document intake on a fluid chart if a resident is at high risk

Troubleshooting constipation

Add fibre and fluid into resident's diet and toilet regularly – see table 1. For an extra high fibre solution, blend pear juice, all bran and dried fruit till smooth and serve with porridge.

Table 1. High fibre foods

| Food | Fibre | Food | Fibre |
|-------------------|-------|----------------------|-------|
| ½ cup All bran | 8.6g | 1 cup cooked lentils | 15.6g |
| 3 pitted prunes | 2.5g | 1 medium banana | 3.1g |
| 200ml pear juice | 4.8g | 1 cup brown rice | 3.5g |
| 1 cup cooked oats | 4.0g | 2 Weet Bix | 3.6g |

If dietary fibre and fluid are unable to resolve constipation please refer your resident to a medical officer as they may require laxatives or aperients to avoid fecal impaction.

Further Resources

Better health channel: www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

National Continence Foundation: www.continence.org.au

The Gut Foundation: <http://www.gut.nsw.edu.au/>

Key Points

To maintain healthy bowels adults need:

- 30g fibre per day
- 6-8 glasses of fluids
- Regular activity

If residents are unable to eat adequate fibre, a supplement should be considered.



Small on volume. Big on nutrition.

| Nutritional Information | | 60mL | 200mL |
|-------------------------|-----------|-----------|------------|
| Energy | kcal (kJ) | 120 (502) | 400 (1680) |
| Protein | g | 5.4 | 18 |
| Carbohydrate, total | g | 12.8 | 42.8 |
| - Sugars | g | 3.9 | 13 |
| Fat, total | g | 5 | 17 |
| Fibre | g | 1.5 | 5 |
| - Soluble fibre | g | 1.5 | 5 |
| - Insoluble fibre | g | 0 | 0 |

| Flavours | Product code |
|------------|--------------|
| Vanilla | 12100787 |
| Neutral | 12100782 |
| Apricot | 12100772 |
| Strawberry | 12100786 |
| Coffee | 12100781 |

| Features | Benefits |
|--|---|
| Nutritionally dense, high energy & protein | Assists with malnutrition |
| 5 great-tasting flavours | Improves patient compliance & reduces taste fatigue |
| Added benefit of fibre | Improves GI health |

**400 calories
18g protein
5g fibre**

Nestlé Nutrition
Nestlé Healthcare Nutrition, 20-24 Howleys Road, Notting Hill, Victoria 3168, Australia - 1800 671 628 (toll free)
www.nestlenutrition.com.au © Reg. Trademark of Société des Produits Nestlé S.A. © 30340

Case Study

Customer: TLC Marina Residential Aged Care, North Altona Vic

Challenge: 2 years ago Marina Aged Care had an on-call dietitian service, some inconsistencies in weights and nutrition systems, and certain ongoing issues with their food provision. They weren't in a terrible position but needed some assistance with Standard 2.10 "Nutrition and Hydration" and the Clinical Services Manager was keen to get them to a position where they could be confident that they were "100% Accreditation-Ready at any given time".

Solution: Marina employed MDC's regular dietitian services. Initially, a full weights screen was carried out, showing how weight change had been managed for each resident. MDC completed a nutrition audit to assess quality improvement, which gave a complete picture of where Marina was with accreditation preparation. MDC also provided recommendations for improvement.

Over a 2 year period, regular visits ensured that MDC got to know the staff and the individual needs of the facility. The MDC dietitian implemented a number of initiatives over this time, including introducing food-based fortification to the menu, holding regular continuous improvement meetings and facilitating regular, on-going education and training.

Results: In 2009 Marina passed all 44 standards with flying colours, including Nutrition and Hydration. Supplement costs and wastage have reduced, due to strategies including a milk trolley, to ease reliance on supplements and improve hydration. MDC continues to provide regular services and the Clinical Services Manager can be confident that she will always be 100% Accreditation-Ready for Nutrition and Hydration.

"We have been extremely happy with the regular service MDC provides. Our MDC dietitian has become ingrained as a part of the team at our facility. I have recommended MDC services to other facilities and would recommend them as the best dietitian service for aged care again."

Jane Elliott - Clinical Services Manager
Marina RAC, North Altona



Nursing Homes in the News

Making performance data public stimulates quality improvement.

A recent report by the Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW), 'Towards national indicators of safety and quality in health care' has shown that by publishing data on specific health indicators including malnutrition, a significant improvement is observed. ⁽¹⁾ Drawing attention to the nutritional status of residents (e.g. through screening and auditing) highlights areas that require attention, resulting in improvements in the nutritional status of individual residents.

MDC strongly advocates for regular nutrition screening and review in maintaining adequate nutrition and hydration among residents (achieving standard 2.10). MDC also conducts facility weight and nutrition screens to determine your facility's level of malnutrition risk.

Reference

1. Is your health care safe and up to scratch? How would you know? DPS Guide to Aged Care. <http://www.agedcareguide.com.au/news.asp?newsid=4042>

About MDC

Melbourne Dietetic Centre (MDC) provides specialised aged-care services of an exceptionally high professional standard.

Why should I choose an MDC dietitian for my facility?

- ✓ Aged-care specialists
- ✓ Flexibility to work with you according to your individual needs
- ✓ We concentrate on making you accreditation-ready all the time
- ✓ Always contactable (full-time reception and after hours emergency line)
- ✓ Better value for money as effective and efficient use of time and resources
- ✓ Value and experience of a cohesive Team of 14 Dietitians, not just a sole provider
- ✓ Access to a plethora of resources, associations, current research and best practice guidelines
- ✓ Strong focus on quality assurance and continuous improvement both internally and for your facility
- ✓ Your own Customer Partner, who keeps in regular contact with you to ensure optimum services are continually provided according to your needs

MDC can provide your facility:

- Staff education
- Food service workshops
- Nutrition and hydration auditing
- Menu reviews and menu planning
- Assistance for passing accreditation
- Quality Assurance activities and reports
- Nutrition screening for malnutrition risk
- Comprehensive Diet Manual detailing modified diets & special meal plans
- Efficient regular or on-call clinical services
- Locum or leave cover for your regular dietitian
- Nutrition and hydration policy development



Melbourne Dietetic Centre

For further information visit www.dietitiancentre.com.au

47 Whitehorse Road Balwyn VIC 3103 Phone: 9817 1544 Fax: 9817 1582 Email: admin@mdc.id.au

