



You Can! Prevent Malnutrition



Massachusetts Malnutrition Awareness Week is May 13th - 17th

Poor nutrition is common among seniors, especially after hospitalization. Here are some warning signs:

- **Unintentional weight loss** - Losing weight without trying is a sign that something may be going on with your nutrition and your health.
- **Limited access to food, especially healthy food** - If you are unable to get out and buy groceries or are on a fixed income, getting healthy food may be a challenge.
- **Decreased appetite** - Appetite changes as we age. Issues like difficulty chewing or swallowing, nausea or vomiting can lead to decreased appetite.
- **Mood changes and fatigue** - Depression and anxiety may contribute to a reduced appetite. Fatigue or lack of mobility can make cooking and shopping difficult.
- **Social isolation** - Living alone can lead to decreased intake.
- **Chronic diseases and medications** - Some diseases require a restrictive diet or reduce the absorption of nutrients into the body. Certain medications have side effects that can affect appetite or interact with food and nutrients.
- **Alcohol and other beverage consumption** - Excess consumption of alcohol can contribute to nutrient deficiencies. Intake of beverages (other than water) can displace food and limit intake of nutrients.

What can you do?

If you are worried about your nutritional status (or that of someone you know) there are a few things that you can do:

- Talk to your Primary Care Physician (PCP) and share your concerns.
- Ask for a referral to a dietitian through your PCPs office or through Minuteman.
- Talk to your Care Manager or call Minuteman about starting home delivered meals.
- Attend lunch at your local COA or senior dining site.
- Apply for the SNAP program or other food assistance programs.

Prepared by the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs

We're Celebrating Older Americans Month too!



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