



You Can!

Make Mealtime a Success:
Tips for Caregivers

**November is
National Family Caregivers Month**



Getting one well-balanced meal on the table every day, let alone three, can be a challenge for anyone. It's even harder with all the other tasks of caregiving, especially if your loved one has special diet needs or physical challenges.

But food is the body's fuel, and part of its medicine, too. For an older adult with a long-term illness, good nutrition takes on even more importance. And healthy eating isn't all about calorie counting and scouring food labels. Meals are also a time for connection, and good food is one of life's basic pleasures -- at any age.

Tips for Common Challenges

Feeding a loved one with an illness comes with special challenges. Start with the tips below, and keep in mind your loved one's special dietary needs -- doctor's orders come first.

Stick to the basics. Getting nutrition right doesn't have to be complicated. Much of nutrition comes down to this: lots of fruits and veggies, lean meats, beans, whole grains, and a few servings of dairy. Add in poultry, eggs, and some nuts, and you're good to go.

Watch for difficulty with chewing, swallowing, or mouth soreness. Cut food into small pieces, or try softer, creamier foods, such as baked sweet potatoes or pasta. Thicker liquids and a straw can help with swallowing. Make sure to serve water with meals, and have a dentist check your loved one's dentures or teeth.

Confusion or stress. If meals are stressful, simplify things, and allow for small pleasures. Keep the table clear and only put out utensils you need. Serve a sweet some days, unless you can't for health reasons. Even some fruit can do the trick. Try to eat together or have company to make meals more social.

Source: www.webmd.com

Minuteman Can Help! Call (888)222-6171

People with dementia are at higher risk for poor nutrition, weight loss or gain, and dehydration. If you are caring for a loved one with Alzheimer's disease or related dementia, our Registered Dietitian will counsel you at home, and provide an individual care plan, caregiver coaching, adaptive equipment and follow-up support.

Made possible with funding provided by the Northwest Suburban Health Alliance/CHNA 15 DoN funds from Lahey Hospital and Medical Center and Winchester Hospital.

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