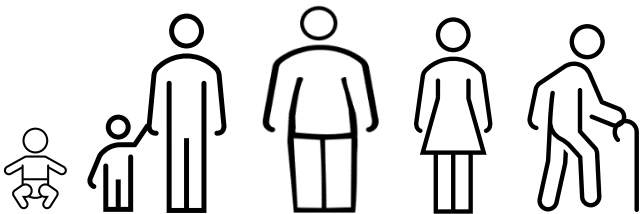


# Malnutrition in Alberta

Malnutrition happens when you don't get enough food and nutrition. This may be from a poor appetite, or when you need more nutrition than you can eat or drink.

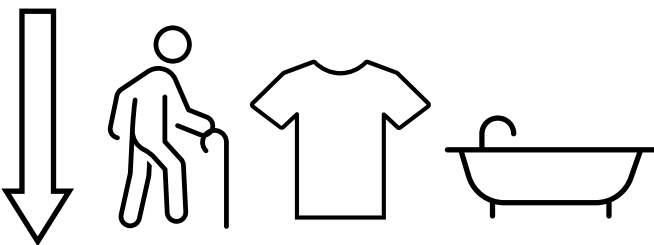
## Malnutrition can affect all:

- people
- ages
- body sizes



Malnutrition can lead to a decline in health and strength. It may be harder to do things for yourself.

You may get too weak to walk, dress, and bathe by yourself.



## What increases risk?

Having one or more of the following can increase your risk of malnutrition.

### Lifestyle and emotional:

- grief and loss
- loneliness and social isolation
- lack of knowledge or low interest in food, cooking, and nutrition
- low income and limited access to food

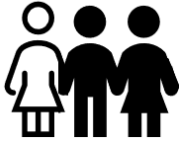
### Medical:

- anxiety and depression
- chronic illnesses such as cancer, diabetes, Parkinson's disease
- confusion
- dental problems
- losing weight without trying to
- loss of taste and smell
- medication side effects
- physical disability, such as arthritis or poor mobility
- poor appetite
- swallowing difficulty

# Research shows

## In Alberta

When coming to the hospital:

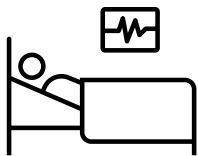


**1 in 3 children** have malnutrition



**1 in 2 adults** have malnutrition

In hospital:



Adults and children stay about **3 days longer** when they have malnutrition

## In Canada

Adults and children who come to hospital well-nourished, may become malnourished while in hospital.

People who are malnourished have a higher risk of infection.

## In hospital

The risk of malnutrition starting or getting worse can occur from not eating enough or not getting enough nutrition.

Not getting enough nutrition can be due to:

- needing more nutrition than usual
- feeling sick, tired, or in pain
- being hungry between meals
- not having access to food between meals
- not liking the look, smell, or taste of the food offered
- not wanting the food that is offered

Talk to your healthcare team if you find that you cannot eat all your meals or if you would like more food.

## To learn more



- Talk to your healthcare team.
- Call Health Link at 811 and ask to talk to a dietitian or complete a [self-referral form](#) on ahs.ca/811.
- Visit [ahs.ca/Nutrition](#) or [ahs.ca/NutritionScreening](#).