

Tips to get patients ready for meals

Food is medicine and supports treatment, health and healing. Getting patients ready for meals can help patients eat better. This tip sheet provides ideas to make meals enjoyable and easy to eat.

✓ Check that patients are ready to eat



Sit patients up at 90°



Clean patients' hands



Ensure food is in reach



Ensure glasses and dentures are worn

✓ Assist patients who need help with meals



Open food packages



Cut food into small pieces



Help with eating and drinking



Do non-urgent tasks outside of mealtime

✓ Create a positive eating environment



Provide good lighting



Limit noises, unpleasant smells



Clear tray table



Reduce interruptions



Schedule tests, procedures outside of mealtime

✓ Consider medical factors that can affect appetite



Swallowing ability



Constipation, diarrhea, vomiting



Medication



Depression, discomfort, pain

➔ Know when meals arrive

If unsure of meal delivery times, confirm with Patient Food Services.

➔ Support patients to eat on their own

Special utensils can help patients with poor motor control - consult Occupational Therapy.

➔ Give encouragement

Offer positive feedback about the meal being served.

➔ Consult dietitian

If you have any questions about a patient's nutrition, consult the dietitian.