

## Tips to promote eating well in hospital

Food is medicine and supports treatment, health and healing. Eating enough food increases nutrition intake, which helps patients recover from illness. This tip sheet provides ideas for how to improve patients' nutrition.

### ✓ Provide the right diet

Good nutrition starts with the right diet. If you are not sure if a patient is on the right diet, check with the dietitian. There are many different types of diets to fit patients' needs:



Allergies or intolerances  
(e.g. gluten-free)



Health conditions  
(e.g. diabetic, low-sodium)



Chewing or swallowing difficulty  
(e.g. minced)



Personal, cultural or religious restrictions  
(e.g. vegetarian)

### ✓ Find out patients' food likes and dislikes



If a selective menu is offered, have patients choose the foods and drinks they want



Offer snacks if patients are hungry



Visitors may bring in food as long as it's allowed on the patients' diets



### Promote enjoyment

If patients eat poorly because they dislike their special diet, check with the dietitian to see if more foods can be allowed.

### ✓ Get patients ready to eat at mealtimes



Help patients sit up and ensure food is in reach



Offer assistance with meal setup and eating



Provide a well-lit, calm, and clean environment



### Consult dietitian

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