

## 10 Dietary Tips for Nursing Home Residents

1. Know what the resident weighs on admission to the nursing home and inquire monthly as to loved one's weight.
2. At the time of admission to nursing home, report to staff any special diet the resident requires related to any medical conditions such as diabetes, high blood pressure, heart problems, kidney problems, stroke.
3. Alert the staff if the resident has been on a special consistency diet prior to admission, i.e. soft foods, pureed foods, thick liquids, ground meat, or has any food allergies.
4. Inform the nursing home staff of any problems with dentures, partials, or dental problems which will interfere with the resident's ability to chew and eat foods.
5. Inform the nursing home staff if the resident has any problems with swallowing or choking prior to admission.
6. Inform the nursing home staff if the resident requires assistant to perform meal tray and/or assistance eating, i.e. assistive devices to eat, physical assistance of others to eat, special cups or glass.
7. Within the first week of admission, meet with the Registered Dietitian or Dietary Manager to discuss resident's food likes and dislikes, preferences, meal times, snacks, foods that may interact with medications, for example Coumadin.
8. Visit during meal time to observe:
  - if foods are served at the proper times
  - the correct diet and consistency have been ordered
  - foods are the appropriate temperatures (hot foods hot, cold foods cold)
  - foods and meals are appetizing and palatable
  - fluids are offered with each meal
  - meals are well balanced to meet nutritional needs
  - there is sufficient quantity for resident
  - there is sufficient nursing home staff to assist with meal delivery
  - substitutions are available upon request to suit the resident's needs
9. Before bringing in snacks or food from home, discuss with the staff caring for the resident that additional foods are allowed on the diet plan ordered by the doctor.
10. When bringing in food items, bring in small quantities, keep in air tight containers, and check with staff if refrigeration is required.