

Nutrition & Hydration

Nutrition & hydration week 11th-17th March 2024

Why are care home residents more at risk of dehydration?

As we get older, our natural feeling of thirst declines and, if we don't feel thirsty, we can be less inclined to drink. If residents struggle with eating and drinking, they may only be able to eat and drink when assisted. If residents suffer from incontinence, they may limit the amount they drink to avoid going to the toilet and the issue of embarrassment.

Dehydration is a preventable condition.

Understanding why a resident is becoming dehydrated is vital to working out ways to encourage them to drink and stay hydrated.

Practical ways to help residents to drink:

- Remind residents of the health benefits of staying hydrated. These include it helps to deliver nutrients to cells, prevents infections, keeps joints lubricated and organs functioning properly, improves cognition and mood and improves sleep.
- Remind residents of the problems associated with dehydration. These include constipation, dry skin, drowsiness, confusion and low blood pressure.
- Support and help those residents who need assistance to eat and drink, in particular those who have Dementia or have a condition which makes it difficult for them to coordinate eating and drinking.
- Provide a range of resident's favourite drinks (at the right temperature for them) at set times throughout the day.
- Social occasions with family, friends and other residents in the home can be a good time to encourage residents to drink.
- Some residents may like to have a favourite cup or glass close to hand so that they can sip fluids, little and often.
- When giving medication, encourage residents to take one pill at a time with a sip of water or their favourite juice.
- Encourage residents to eat foods with a high water content, such as soups, jellies, smoothies, milk puddings and fruit.
- Throughout the day regularly support residents to go to the toilet

Why good nutrition is important for older adults?

As we get older, it's important that we continue to eat well. Ageing can result in changes to our metabolism, and we can often become less active, which can in turn mean our energy requirements reduce in older age. However, this is only by about 200 calories and our vitamin and mineral requirements remain the same. Eating healthily can also help increase quality of life in older age; it can help manage our weight, reduce the risk of malnutrition, fight off illnesses and diseases, promote good mental health, provide enough energy to fuel day to day activities, hobbies and much more. Healthy eating isn't about cutting out foods, dieting or sacrifice –it's about enjoying a wide variety of foods in the right amounts to give your body what it needs.



For more information & resources on nutrition and hydration please visit:

[Resources | N&H Week \(nutritionandhydrationweek.co.uk\)](https://www.nutritionandhydrationweek.co.uk)

[NHS commissioning » 10 key characteristics of 'good nutrition and hydration care' \(england.nhs.uk\)](https://www.england.nhs.uk)

IPC Advice, Support, Information & Resources:

- Advice, support, and information for care home staff on the management of all infections: E.g., Covid 19; MRSA; CDI; *E. coli*; Scabies
- Advice & support to undertake a range of care home IPC audits to national standard.
- Support safe hospital discharge for residents who have been treated for an infection.
- IPC annual training programme (2023/24) & bespoke IPC courses for care home managers, clinical staff, IPC link champions, care and domestic staff.
- Advice & support on new builds & extensions to meet IPC specifications.

A wide range of excellent **IPC policies and procedures** are available to help you to manage infections in your care homes. Please follow the link below: [Care Services Cumberland - Policies and Procedures | Cumbria County Council](#)

Training Dates for Your Diary

March

- Infection prevention and control training for community-based services 2024
Tuesday 19th March 1pm-2.30pm [Click here to join the meeting](#)

April

- Infection prevention and control training for residential care settings 2024
Wednesday 3rd April 10am-12.30pm [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- Infection prevention and control training for community-based services 2024
Wednesday 24th April 11am-12.30pm [Click here to join the meeting](#)

May

- Infection prevention and control training for residential care settings 2024
Tuesday 7th May 1pm-3.30pm [Click here to join the meeting](#)
- Infection prevention and control training for community-based services 2024
Thursday 23rd May 1pm-2.30pm [Click here to join the meeting](#)
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June

- Infection prevention and control training for residential care settings 2024
Thursday 6th June 10am-12.30pm [Click here to join the meeting](#)

Infection prevention and control training for community-based services 2024
Wednesday 26th June 10am-11.30am [Click here to join the meeting](#)