

General Aging in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

Health Promotion and Aging in Adults with IDD

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Introduction

- ❑ Good nutrition is important to good health and quality of life
- ❑ Physiological changes and changes in nutritional patterns put older adults at risk for nutritional concerns
- ❑ Older adults with IDD are at increased risk for poor health



Overview

Nutrition concerns with aging

- ❑ Decreased food intake
- ❑ Dehydration
- ❑ Inadequate intake of certain vitamins and minerals
- ❑ Obesity

Physical activity

- ❑ Benefits and promotion in older adults
- ❑ Strategies to overcome barriers



Poor Food Intake

Contributing factors:

- ❑ Decreased appetite
- ❑ Impaired sense of smell or taste
- ❑ Poor dentition
- ❑ Secondary to a chewing or swallowing issue
- ❑ Memory loss or missed hunger cues
- ❑ Social factors
- ❑ Depression

Poor food intake can lead to weight loss, muscle loss, malnutrition and reduced quality of life



Dehydration

Dehydration in aging can be related to:

- ❑ Decreased fluid intake caused by diminished sense of thirst
- ❑ Increased losses (i.e. increased urine output from medications such as diuretics)

Dehydration can present as:

- ❑ Symptoms may include headache, confusion, constipation, change in blood pressure, dizziness, dry mouth/nose, electrolyte imbalances
- ❑ Falls, confusion, change in level of consciousness, weakness, increased fatigue



Inadequate Intake of Calcium and Vitamin D

Calcium and Vitamin D

- ❑ Adequate intake contributes to maintaining bone mineral density (BMD) and decreasing risk for fractures
- ❑ Risk for low BMD increases with certain medication use, inadequate physical activity and low intake of calcium and vitamin D



Intake of Calcium and Vitamin D

Calcium- Aim for 3 daily servings of calcium rich foods

- ❑ Dairy or fortified alternatives
- ❑ Green leafy vegetables
- ❑ Almonds

Vitamin D- Best dietary sources

- ❑ Fortified dairy or non-dairy alternatives, cereal or juice
- ❑ Fatty fish (salmon, tuna and mackerel)

Prevention is key!



Inadequate Intake of Vitamin B12

Aging and vitamin B12

- ❑ Decreased ability to absorb B12 with age
- ❑ Deficiency symptoms can mimic Alzheimer's or other chronic neurological conditions

Symptoms of deficiency include:

- ❑ Dementia and confusion
- ❑ Extreme fatigue and weakness
- ❑ Tingling in the arms and legs
- ❑ Anemia



Vitamin B12 Dietary Sources

Vitamin B12- best dietary sources

- ❑ Red meats, turkey, chicken, fish, shellfish
- ❑ Fortified cereals



Obesity

Prevalence of obesity is higher among adults with IDD than in the general population

- ❑ Obesity increases risk of associated chronic diseases
- ❑ Impacts quality of life
- ❑ Places more demand on caregivers

Barriers to healthy eating:

- ❑ Poor diet quality
- ❑ Lack of support in making healthy food choices
- ❑ Difficulty with chewing or swallowing food or aversions to the texture of foods
- ❑ Medications that can contribute to weight gain and changes in appetite



Individualized Plan of Care

- ❑ Interdisciplinary team
- ❑ Determine specific needs
- ❑ Create individualized plan of care
- ❑ Involve the individual to promote autonomy
- ❑ Involve primary caregivers to reinforce understanding



Addressing Nutrition Concerns

- ❑ Support regularly scheduled meals and snacks
- ❑ Ensure meals are culturally appropriate, reflect dietary preference and take into account medical considerations
- ❑ Offer feeding assistance during mealtimes as needed
- ❑ Consider chewing and swallowing ability
- ❑ Offer meals in a pleasant environment, with others, if possible
- ❑ Monitor food, fluid, nutrient intake and weight to ensure needs are met
- ❑ Provide support to help individuals choose healthy foods



Promoting Healthy Eating for Adults with IDD

Recommendations include:

- ❑ Choose nutrient dense foods
- ❑ Fill half the plate with fruits and vegetables
- ❑ Choose whole grains over white grains
- ❑ Avoid highly processed snack foods and high fat meats
- ❑ Focus on protein rich foods to preserve lean muscle mass
 - ❑ Some evidence that a Mediterranean-style diet may be beneficial to slow age-related cognitive decline
- ❑ Drink water throughout the day



Source: CDC

Physical Activity for Older People with IDD

Adequate physical activity is associated:

- ❑ Healthy weight maintenance
- ❑ Decreased risk of chronic diseases
- ❑ Improvements in psychological well-being
- ❑ Improved quality of life

CDC recommends 150 minutes of physical activity per week

- ❑ Brisk walking
- ❑ Dancing
- ❑ Adapted group classes
- ❑ Strength and flexibility training



Barriers to Physical Activity

Older adults with IDD face many barriers to physical activity

Social and physical accessibility challenges:

- ❑ Limited community resources or adapted programs
- ❑ Lack of transportation
- ❑ Physical disability or mobility impairment
- ❑ Lack of social acceptance
- ❑ Limited financial resources
- ❑ No community and/or personal supports



Tips to Increase Physical Activity

- ❑ Start slowly and gradually increase intensity
- ❑ Split activity into short periods
- ❑ Choose activities that people ENJOY
- ❑ Provide support to persons trying to increase physical activity
- ❑ Group exercise can offer social interaction
- ❑ Remember it may take time to incorporate regular activity into one's lifestyle



Multidisciplinary Care

Coordinate care between providers to address specific needs to support wellness

- ❑ Physician or Physician Assistant
- ❑ Nurse
- ❑ Dietitian
- ❑ Social Worker
- ❑ Case Manager
- ❑ Physical Therapist
- ❑ Care Coordinator
- ❑ Direct Support Professional
- ❑ Family Members



Conclusion

- ❑ Identified several nutrition concerns
- ❑ Identified strategies to promote optimal quality of life

Remember: It's never too late to encourage healthy eating and physical activity, no matter a person's age!



Resources for Physical Activity

The ARC

- ❑ Advocacy organization for individuals with intellectual and developmental disabilities
- ❑ Community based therapeutic recreation
- ❑ Program offerings include cooking classes, walking clubs, basketball clinics, bootcamp exercise classes, aquatics

YMCA

- ❑ May offer inclusive programs like adaptive swimming

Department of Conservation and Recreation

- ❑ Universal Access Program
- ❑ Offer outdoor recreation opportunities for people of all abilities

Disabilityinfo.org

- ❑ INDEX website offers listing of recreational opportunities for people with disabilities



Resources for Nutrition

My Plate

- ❑ A practical source of information and guide to help individuals help find healthy eating solutions



Center for Disease Control and Prevention

- ❑ Offers support for public health strategies and programs that improve dietary quality, support healthy development, and reduce chronic disease

More Matters

- ❑ An online campaign that helps people eat more fruits and vegetables by providing recipes and supports

MassLeague.org

- ❑ A comprehensive list of health centers in Massachusetts that include nutritionists who are available for inexpensive consultations and classes

Grocery Store Nutritionists

- ❑ Grocery store chains such as Stop & Shop and BigY have in-store nutritionists who offer free advice, classes, and shopping demos periodically



Additional Webinars on Aging with IDD

General Aging in Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

- Understanding Age Related Changes
- The Role of Polypharmacy
- Identifying and Assessing Pain
- Behavior Related Changes and Aging in Adults with IDD
- Health Promotion and Aging in Adults with IDD
- Mobility and Aging in Adults with IDD
- Aging with Down Syndrome
- Aging and Cerebral Palsy

Dementia and Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

- Introduction to Dementia and Aging with IDD
- Early Evaluation of Dementia and Alzheimer's Disease
- Stages of Alzheimer's Disease
- Applying the Knowledge to Dementia Caregiving and Caregiver Support
- Caregiving in Action: Case Studies and Practical Tips



Additional Aging with IDD Resources

Massachusetts Department of Developmental Services (DDS)
www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dds/aging-with-id.html

Center for Developmental Disabilities Evaluation & Research
http://shriver.umassmed.edu/cdder/aging_idd_education



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