

Tracking Patient Meal Intake

Why track patient intake at meals?



To prevent and treat malnutrition.



Malnutrition is linked to delayed healing and a longer hospital stay.

How to track patient meal intake?

- 1 Review the menu on the tray to see what the patient received.
- 2 Note what is consumed by the patient. Intake percentages (%) are below. Fluids such as coffee, tea, or water are recorded for hydration only.
- 3 Write % on flow sheet.¹

50% or less*

- Eats less than ½ of main entrée at a meal.
- Eats less than one protein choice at a meal.

Greater than 50%

- Eats almost all of the main entrée and most other items.
- Eats more than one protein choice at a meal.

100%

- Eats and drinks everything on the meal tray.

Protein choice examples:

- Poultry, beef, pork, fish
- Eggs
- Dairy (milk, yogurt and cheese),
- Peanut butter
- Vegetarian entrée option
- Oral nutrition supplements (e.g. Ensure® Protein Max, Boost® Fruit Flavoured Beverage)

What if patient meal intake is low?



Ask patients their reasons for the low food intake. Also,



- Offer help at mealtimes if needed (e.g. opening food packages).
- Update preferences if they don't like the food they received.
- Consult the dietitian if more help is needed.

*When to consider consulting the dietitian?

- If the patient eats 50% or less for three days in a row.

¹ For Connect Care: I/O flow sheet in the row, percent meals eaten (%).



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For more information, visit ahs.ca/malnutrition