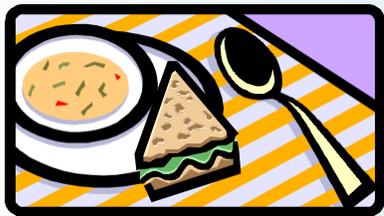


# Nursing Home Residents' Rights

## What You Should Know About Food, Eating, and Nutrition Care in a Nursing Home

Food and eating are important parts of everyone's daily life. While you are a resident in a nursing home, this enjoyable, often relaxing activity should not change. You have certain rights regarding the type of diet and nutritional services you receive. Also, the facility has certain responsibilities to ensure that all of these rights are respected and that you receive adequate nutrition. However, your rights do not override food safety.



### Treatment and Care Issues

Did you know that you have the right to:

- † Be involved in planning your care and treatment. You can make informed decisions regarding your food, including your therapeutic diet.
- † Be allowed to make informed decisions regarding the texture of food (soft, chopped, or pureed/blended).
- † Be told in advance and be involved regarding any changes in your diet.

- † Participate in planning your treatment for weight maintenance, weight loss, or weight gain.
- † Develop advance health care directives stating whether or not you want tube feeding and intravenous (I.V.) therapy, if unable to eat.

The United States is made up of people from all over the world and food plays an important role in each of these cultures. How it is prepared, when it is prepared and how it is eaten, are all important. The facility should recognize the fact that individuals have different preferences and add more variety to food choices.

### Meals

Did you know that you have the right to:

- † Choose when and where to eat in the facility, and whether or not you want to eat with others, or by yourself.
- † Be served in a reasonable period of time after being seated at the dining table.
- † Be allowed to receive gifts of food, according to facility policy.
- † Be served meals at the same time as your table companions or roommate.

## What You Should Know About Food, Eating, and Nutrition Care in a Nursing Home *(continued)*

### *Facility Requirements*

It is the facility's responsibility to:

- T Serve nutritious foods you like within your preferences, which include your cultural and religious preferences.
- T Serve you foods that are nutritious, tasty, attractive, and prepared at the proper temperature.
- T Provide preferred food items, such as shelled eggs, that have been technologically altered to meet food safety standards.
- T Serve you meals in a timely manner, and provide prompt, courteous assistance with eating.
- T Provide specialized dinnerware and eating utensils, which are specifically designed to meet your special needs.

- T Provide a dining room that is comfortable, cheery, home-like, and safe, and promotes a social atmosphere.
- T Provide another food that is equally nutritious if you do not like the food listed on the menu.
- T Offer you a bedtime snack each night.

Every nursing home must provide meals that meet daily and special dietary needs of each resident. All diets must be prescribed by your attending doctor.

For assistance or questions regarding these rights, contact the Dietitian or the Dietary Service Supervisor in your nursing home, or call the Department of Public Health, Licensing and Certification, District Office in your area. You may also want to contact the Ombudsman Program. The telephone numbers for both agencies are posted in your nursing home.

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