



FlexiLearnHub

Knowledge Hub

Professional Resources for Care, Catering & Hospitality

FREE PROFESSIONAL RESOURCE

Healthy Snacks and Nourishing Drinks in Care Settings

A Professional Awareness Guide for Care Staff

Knowledge Hub Resource 010

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Part of the FlexiLearnHub Professional Knowledge Lib

About This Resource

Healthy Snacks and Nourishing Drinks in Care Settings

A Professional Awareness Guide for Care Staff

Supporting Good Nutrition, Hydration and Person-Centred Care

Healthy snacks and nourishing drinks can play an important role in supporting good nutrition and hydration, particularly for individuals who may eat smaller meals or have a reduced appetite. Offering suitable snacks and drinks at appropriate times can help encourage nutritional intake while making eating and drinking a more enjoyable part of everyday care.

This guide has been developed by **FlexiLearnHub** to provide professional awareness of the role healthy snacks and nourishing drinks can play in supporting individuals in care settings. It complements workplace training and should be used alongside organisational policies, documented care plans and guidance from appropriately qualified healthcare professionals.

Purpose of this Resource

This guide has been designed to help readers:

- ✓ Understand why healthy snacks and nourishing drinks may be beneficial.
 - ✓ Appreciate the role of care staff in encouraging good nutrition and hydration.
 - ✓ Recognise the importance of person-centred food and drink choices.
 - ✓ Understand the value of observation, communication and teamwork.
 - ✓ Promote positive eating and drinking experiences that support health and wellbeing.
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Suitable For

- Care Assistants
 - Senior Carers
 - Nurses
 - Care Home Managers
 - Support Workers
 - Healthcare Assistants
 - Catering Teams
 - Family Carers
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Important Information

This guide provides professional awareness only. Care staff should always follow the individual's documented care plan, organisational policies and procedures when supporting nutrition and hydration. Any concerns regarding eating, drinking or nutritional wellbeing should be reported promptly in accordance with local procedures.

Continue Learning

Expand your knowledge through the **FlexiLearnHub Nutrition & Hydration in Care Settings (CPD Accredited)** course, together with our growing range of professional awareness guides and CQC-aligned online training.

Visit:

www.flexilearnhub.com

Why Healthy Snacks and Nourishing Drinks Matter

Supporting Good Nutrition Throughout the Day

Healthy snacks and nourishing drinks can make a valuable contribution to an individual's daily nutrition and hydration. For some people, particularly those who may eat smaller meals or have a reduced appetite, snacks and drinks offered between meals can provide additional opportunities to enjoy food and fluids.

In care settings, encouraging suitable snacks and drinks can help create a flexible, person-centred approach to supporting nutritional wellbeing.

Benefits of Healthy Snacks and Nourishing Drinks

When provided in accordance with an individual's care plan and preferences, healthy snacks and nourishing drinks may help support:

-  Daily nutritional intake.
 -  Good hydration.
 -  Energy throughout the day.
 -  Enjoyment of food and drinks.
 -  Overall health and wellbeing.
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Everyone Has Different Preferences

No two individuals are the same.

Some people may enjoy fruit, yoghurt or cheese, while others may prefer soups, smoothies or milk-based drinks. Cultural traditions, religious beliefs and personal preferences should always be respected.

Providing choice and involving individuals in decisions about food and drink helps promote dignity, independence and person-centred care.

Good Practice

Care staff should:

- ✓ Offer snacks and drinks in accordance with the individual's care plan.
 - ✓ Respect personal preferences and choices.
 - ✓ Encourage without applying pressure.
 - ✓ Promote independence wherever it is safe and appropriate.
 - ✓ Work with catering teams to support enjoyable eating and drinking experiences.
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Remember

Healthy snacks and nourishing drinks are not simply about providing extra food. They help create enjoyable opportunities throughout the day to support nutrition, hydration and overall wellbeing.

Good Practice Reminder

Supporting good nutrition means promoting:

 **Nutrition**

 **Hydration**

 **Enjoyment**

 **Choice**

 **Person-Centred Care**

Encouraging Healthy Choices Throughout the Day

Making Food and Drinks Enjoyable

Healthy snacks and nourishing drinks can help make eating and drinking a positive part of the day. Offering food and drinks at suitable times, presenting them attractively and respecting individual preferences can encourage greater enjoyment and support person-centred care.

Every individual is different, so care staff should always provide support in accordance with the documented care plan.

Encouraging Healthy Choices

Care staff can help by:

- ✓ Offering healthy snacks and drinks between meals where appropriate.
- ✓ Presenting food in an attractive and appetising way.
- ✓ Respecting individual likes, dislikes and cultural preferences.
- ✓ Allowing individuals to enjoy food and drinks at their own pace.
- ✓ Encouraging independence wherever it is safe and appropriate.

The Importance of Variety

Providing a variety of suitable snacks and nourishing drinks can help keep eating and drinking interesting and enjoyable.

Depending on individual preferences and care plans, this may include:

- Fresh fruit.
- Yoghurts.
- Cheese and crackers.
- Milk-based drinks.
- Soups.
- Smoothies.
- Other suitable snacks and drinks provided by the care service.

Offering choice supports dignity, independence and person-centred care.

Good Practice

Care staff should always:

- ✓ Follow the individual's documented care plan.
 - ✓ Encourage healthy choices without applying pressure.
 - ✓ Respect personal preferences and cultural choices.
 - ✓ Work closely with catering teams.
 - ✓ Promote enjoyable eating and drinking experiences.
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Remember

Small, enjoyable opportunities to eat and drink throughout the day can help support nutrition, hydration and overall wellbeing. Creating a positive experience is just as important as the food and drinks themselves.

Good Practice Reminder

Supporting healthy choices means promoting:



Nutrition



Hydration



Enjoyment



Choice



Person-Centred Care

Working Together

Providing healthy snacks and nourishing drinks is a shared responsibility. Care staff, catering teams, nurses, managers and healthcare professionals all work together to ensure individuals receive appropriate nutritional support in accordance with their care plans.

Good communication between team members helps create consistent, positive experiences that support both health and wellbeing.

Observation, Communication and Good Practice

Remaining Observant

Care staff are well placed to notice changes in an individual's eating and drinking habits. Remaining observant throughout the day, including during snack times and when offering nourishing drinks, helps ensure that any concerns are recognised and shared with the appropriate member of the care team.

Observation plays an important role in supporting person-centred care and maintaining continuity of support.

Working Together

Providing healthy snacks and nourishing drinks is a team effort.

Care assistants, senior carers, nurses, catering teams, managers and healthcare professionals all contribute to supporting good nutrition and hydration in accordance with the individual's documented care plan.

By working together and communicating effectively, care teams help create consistent, enjoyable eating and drinking experiences.

Recording and Reporting

Where required by your organisation, relevant observations should be recorded accurately and reported promptly using agreed procedures.

Examples may include:

- ✓ Changes in appetite.
- ✓ Acceptance or refusal of snacks and drinks.
- ✓ Individual food and drink preferences.
- ✓ Any concerns expressed by the individual.

Accurate records help ensure continuity of care and support the wider care team in providing appropriate person-centred support.

Good Practice

Care staff should always:

- ✓ Follow the individual's documented care plan.
 - ✓ Offer healthy snacks and nourishing drinks respectfully.
 - ✓ Encourage without applying pressure.
 - ✓ Report concerns promptly using agreed procedures.
 - ✓ Work closely with colleagues to provide consistent support.
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Remember

Healthy snacks and nourishing drinks are most effective when offered as part of a person-centred approach that values observation, communication, teamwork and individual choice.

Good Practice Reminder

Excellent nutritional support includes:

 **Observation**

 **Communication**

 **Accurate Recording**

 **Teamwork**

 **Person-Centred Care**

Supporting Everyday Wellbeing

Supporting nutrition and hydration is not limited to main meals. By offering suitable snacks and nourishing drinks throughout the day, care teams can provide additional opportunities to encourage eating and drinking while promoting comfort, wellbeing and dignity.

Every positive interaction contributes to a caring environment where individuals feel supported, respected and valued.

Continue Your Learning

Continuing Professional Development

Supporting good nutrition and hydration is an important part of delivering safe, compassionate and person-centred care. By offering healthy snacks, nourishing drinks and positive encouragement in accordance with agreed care plans, care staff can help promote health, wellbeing and quality of life.

Continuing professional development enables care teams to build confidence, improve everyday practice and provide high-quality nutritional support for the individuals they care for.

Continue Your Learning with FlexiLearnHub

Expand your knowledge through our growing range of **CPD-accredited** and **CQC-aligned** online training courses, including:

- ✓ Nutrition & Hydration in Care Settings
- ✓ Dysphagia Awareness & the IDDSI Framework
- ✓ Advanced IDDSI Level 4 Professional Purée Presentation & Plating
- ✓ Food Safety & Hygiene Level 2
- ✓ HACCP Level 2
- ✓ Infection Prevention & Control
- ✓ Dementia Awareness
- ✓ End of Life Care Awareness

Designed to support continuous professional development, workplace compliance and excellence in care and catering.

Related Knowledge Hub Resources

Continue exploring the **FlexiLearnHub Knowledge Hub**, including:

Nutrition & Hydration Resources

Resource 007

Preventing Dehydration in Care Settings – A Professional Awareness Guide for Care Staff

Resource 008

Encouraging Good Nutrition in Care Settings – A Professional Awareness Guide for Care Staff

Resource 009

Supporting Individuals with a Poor Appetite – A Professional Awareness Guide for Care Staff

Resource 010

Healthy Snacks and Nourishing Drinks in Care Settings – A Professional Awareness Guide for Care Staff

Dysphagia & IDDSI Awareness Series

 Resource 002 – Understanding the IDDSI Framework

 Resource 003 – Recognising the Signs of Dysphagia

 Resource 004 – Supporting Safe Mealtimes for People with Dysphagia

 Resource 005 – Texture-Modified Food Awareness

 Resource 006 – Helping Someone Eat and Drink Safely

Our Knowledge Hub continues to grow with free professional resources designed to support best practice across the care, catering and hospitality sectors.

Visit FlexiLearnHub

Explore our free professional resources and CPD-accredited online training at:

www.flexilearnhub.com

About FlexiLearnHub

FlexiLearnHub provides professional online training, downloadable workplace resources and practical awareness guides for the care, catering and hospitality sectors.

Our mission is to make high-quality learning accessible, practical and affordable while supporting safer workplaces, continuous professional development and excellence in care.



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