



DETERMINE Your Nutritional Risk

Circle each that applies to you	Yes
1. I have an illness or condition that made me change the kind and/or amount of food I eat.	2 points
2. I eat fewer than 2 meals per day.	3 points
3. I eat few fruits or vegetables, or milk products.	2 points
4. I have 3 or more drinks of beer, liquor, or wine almost every day.	2 points
5. I have tooth or mouth problems that make it hard for me to eat.	2 points
6. I don't always have enough money to buy the food I need.	4 points
7. I eat alone most of the time.	1 point
8. I take 3 or more different prescribed or over-the-counter drugs a day.	1 point
9. Without wanting to, I have lost or gained 10 pounds in the last 6 months.	2 points
10. I am not always physically able to shop, cook, and/or feed myself	2 points
Total Score	

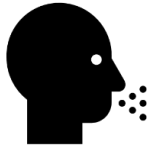
What your score means:

- ❖ **0-2: Good!** You are not currently at risk. Recheck your nutritional score in 6 months.
- ❖ **3-5:** You are at *moderate* nutritional risk. Work on improving your nutritional habits and lifestyle. Recheck your nutritional score in 3 months.
- ❖ **6 or more:** You are at *high* nutritional risk. Take this checklist with you to your next doctor's appointment and request to meet with a dietitian. Talk with them about any problems that you may have.

Nutrition Health Tips: The nutritional checklist on page 1 is based on the factors noted on pages 2-4. Use the acronym “**DETERMINE**” to help you remember.

Disease

Any disease, illness, or chronic condition that affects your ability to eat puts you at increased nutritional risk.



What you can do:

- Set alarms to help to remind you to eat
- Eat smaller, frequent meals
- Use spices or herbs to make foods more appealing
- Choose foods that are easy for you to eat

Eating Poorly

Eating too little or too much can be detrimental to your health. Poor eating habits include skipping meals, not consuming enough fruits and vegetables, drinking too much alcohol, and limiting dairy.



What you can do:

- Make your plate “colorful” with a variety of fruits and vegetables
- Limit alcohol as this can lead to malnutrition when it replaces food.
- If you do not like to drink milk, eat cheese, or yogurt to ensure you are getting calcium and vitamin D for bone health.
- Add milk to canned soups or pudding mixes.
- Choose whole grain options for more fiber in your diet
- Choose fruit juices and dairy products fortified with vitamin D and calcium
- Replace sugar-sweetened beverages with water or unsweetened options (for example, unsweet tea instead of sweet tea)

Tooth Loss/Mouth Pain

A healthy mouth is needed to properly chew and swallow foods. Loose teeth, weak gums, or poor fitting dentures make it harder to eat.



What you can do:

- Go to the dentist regularly
- Have properly fitting dentures
- Brush your teeth after consuming sugary foods or drinks
- Avoid smoking
- Use mouthwash before bed and floss daily
- If chewing is difficult, consume softer foods like yogurt, tuna salad, eggs, or cottage cheese for example.
- ...also, chop/mash vegetables and meat so your teeth have less work to do.

Economic Hardship

Limited income makes it difficult to be able to afford the foods you need to stay healthy.



What you can do:

- Shop at discount stores
- Check the newspaper for “specials” and clip coupons
- Utilize any senior discount programs
- Use government assistant programs such as SNAP or the Commodity Supplemental Food Program (food pantries)
- Try shopping with a friend and splitting cheaper bulk items
- Individually wrap serving sized portions from economy packs of meat and freeze.
- Buy frozen or canned fruits and vegetables. When buying canned options, be sure to choose fruits in water or in their own juices and vegetables with lower sodium.
- Try cheaper sources of proteins like beans and peas.

Reduced Social Contact

Eating with others helps increase feelings of contentedness, well-being, and morale. It also is a great way to make sure you are not forgetting to eat meals.



What you can do:

- Eat at community centers or senior centers
- Eat meals with a friend
- Call a relative or friend at mealtimes if you cannot leave your house
- Eat near a window, radio, or television to feel more connected
- Join a social group or volunteer at a senior meal site
- If you cannot leave your house, try playing games with your friends via the Internet, such as online bridge or scrabble

Multiple Medications

Taking a large number of medications increases the risk of undesirable side effects. These can include diarrhea, nausea, constipation, dizziness, and increased or decreased appetite. Large doses of supplements can also cause similar effects.



What you can do:

- Ask your pharmacist and/or doctor about possible drug/nutrient interactions with your medications
- Fill all of your prescriptions at one pharmacy to avoid possible medication interactions
- Make a list of every drug and vitamin and/or mineral supplement you take and bring it with you to the doctor and pharmacist
- Only take the prescribed amount of medication
- If you are having issues with a medication, ask your physician about other options

Involuntary Weight Loss/Gain

Sudden weight loss or gain can be indicative of a bigger problem. It is important to seek medical advice in these cases. Being overweight or underweight can be dangerous for your health.



What you can do:

- Consult your doctor about the recent weight change
- Eat a consistent and balanced diet to avoid weight fluctuation
- Consult a dietitian for an appropriate eating plan
- Make sure you are consuming enough nutrients to maintain lean body mass
- Try low impact exercises, such as swimming or biking
- Include strength building activities with small weights to reduce your risk of falling

Needs Assistance in Self Care

Experiencing difficulty in day to day activities makes staying healthy difficult. Not being able to shop, cook, or feed yourself can increase the risk for malnutrition.



What you can do:

- Order foods from the grocery store for delivery or curbside pickup
- You may be eligible for home delivered meal services
- Maintain a relationship with family, friends, and/or neighbors as they may be able to assist you

Elder Years Above 80

As you get older, your body tends to not work as well as it used to. This can increase risk of health problems. Proper nutrition is important to keep the mind and body healthy.



What you can do:

- Stay active and social
- Eat a variety of good foods and satisfying meals
- Stay up-to-date on health visits
- Consult with your doctor and/or dietitian about supplements that may be beneficial for you