



Tip #8

Please Pass the Hot Sauce

Food preferences develop over our lifetime—what, where and when we eat, as well as “must haves” for special occasions. Family traditions and personal choices influence our satisfaction of a meal or a holiday. That certain Thanksgiving stuffing recipe and a favorite cake for the yearly bake sale are just two examples of how food satisfies emotionally as well as physically.

Most people like their coffee hot; some aren't satisfied without a dash of hot sauce with their meal. Meals and snacks are often the highlights of our day! Let's make the most of these moments by learning what matters to each person. Discover and honor choices, to increase satisfaction, comfort, and likely also benefit the care partner. For example, if I am able to eat breakfast quietly, privately, at a window with a footstool to stretch my legs, my outlook for the day improves. When dining is a positive experience, residents will stay hydrated, avoid depression and maintain a healthy weight.

Dining is always about more than nutrition. Emotional and social connections with food can become even more important in a new home. Care partners are challenged to promote independence, choice and socialization with each dining experience. Consistent staffing is essential to good nutrition and hydration during meals—those familiar with a person's eating patterns may notice subtle changes in appetite and behaviors that reveal a change in health status.

If unable to stir a favorite recipe, the person can taste-test, or supervise! Help individuals create those special dishes and table settings that matter most to them. If accommodation is needed, adapt the preparation process so that the person controls as much as possible.

Honor the dignity of the individual. If dining assistance is needed, sit with the person and have a plate of food in front of you to make the resident feel you are sharing the meal, among friends.

Action steps:

1. Please post this flyer for all staff to read!
2. Research and respect the resident's dining history and preferred eating schedule.
3. Practice assistive techniques with co-workers to increase empathy.
4. Take advantage of great tools such as the “Dining with Friends”™ free webinar at: <http://www.htstherapy.com/webinar-dining-friends-innovative-approach-dining-people-dementia/>
5. Study a course on person centered dining available through at [Advancing Excellence](#) .

For more information and training:

- To find out more about the Advancing Excellence Person Centered Care Goal go to: <https://www.nhqualitycampaign.org/goalDetail.aspx?g=PCC#>
- Find a regional MC5 group in your area for more information and education on Person Centered Care in Missouri at: <http://www.momc5.com/>
- For more information about Person Centered Care and training across the country go to the Pioneer Network website at: <http://www.pioneernetwork.net/Providers/Dining/TransformingDining/>