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NCP Step 1: Nutrition Assessment

Nutrition Assessment Domains

In the development of the standardized nutrition diagnosis language, the following five domains of nutrition assessment data were identified—Food/Nutrition-Related History; Biochemical Data, Medical Tests, and Procedures; Anthropometric Measurements; Nutrition-Focused Physical Findings; and Client History. Because the nutrition assessment forms the basis for identifying a nutrition diagnosis, these terms are reflected on each nutrition diagnosis reference sheet and the signs/symptoms are grouped by category of nutrition assessment data.

Following are some examples of data collected within each assessment domain; however, these examples are not all-inclusive:

Food/Nutrition-Related History consists of Food and Nutrient Intake, Food and Nutrient Administration, Medication and Herbal Supplement Use, Knowledge/Beliefs/Attitudes, Behavior, Factors Affecting Access to Food and Food/Nutrition-Related Supplies, Physical Activity and Function, and Nutrition-Related Patient/Client-Centered Measures.

Food and Nutrient Intake includes factors such as composition and adequacy of food and nutrient intake, and meal and snack patterns.

Food and Nutrient Administration includes current and previous diets and/or food modifications, eating environment, and enteral and parenteral nutrition administration.

Medication and Herbal Supplement Use includes prescription and over-the-counter medications, including herbal preparations and complementary medicine products used.

Knowledge/Beliefs/Attitudes includes understanding of nutrition-related concepts and conviction of the truth and feelings/emotions toward some nutrition-related statement or phenomenon, along with readiness to change nutrition-related behaviors.

Behavior includes patient/client activities and actions which influence achievement of nutrition-related goals.

Factors Affecting Access to Food and Food/Nutrition-Related Supplies includes factors that affect intake and availability of a sufficient quantity of safe, healthful food and water as well as food/nutrition-related supplies.

Physical activity and function includes physical activity, cognitive and physical ability to engage in specific tasks, e.g., breastfeeding and self-feeding.

Nutrition-related patient/client-centered measures consists of patient/client's perception of his or her nutrition intervention and its impact on life.

Note: Whenever possible, nutrient intake data should be considered in combination with clinical, biochemical, anthropometric information, medical diagnosis, clinical status, and/or other factors as well as diet to provide a valid assessment of nutritional status based on a totality of the evidence. (Institute of Medicine. *Dietary Reference Intakes: Applications in Dietary Assessment*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press; 2000.)

Anthropometric Measurements include height, weight, body mass index (BMI), growth pattern indices/percentile ranks, and weight history.

Biochemical Data, Medical Tests, and Procedures include laboratory data, (e.g., electrolytes, glucose, and lipid panel) and tests (e.g., gastric emptying time, resting metabolic rate).

Nutrition-Focused Physical Findings include findings from an evaluation of body systems, muscle and subcutaneous fat wasting, oral health, suck/swallow/breathe ability, appetite, and affect.

Client History consists of current and past information related to personal, medical, family, and social history.

Personal History includes general patient/client information such as age, gender, race/ethnicity, language, education, and role in family.

Patient/Client/Family Medical/Health History includes patient/client or family disease states, conditions, and illnesses that may have a nutritional impact.

Social History includes items such as socioeconomic status, housing situation, medical care support, and involvement in social groups.

In addition to this reference, additional resources for nutrition assessment include *ADA Pocket Guide to Nutrition Assessment* (3), and *ADA Pocket Guide to Pediatric Nutrition Assessment* (4).

In regard to the Biochemical, Medical Tests, and Procedures category of nutrition assessment, the nutrition diagnoses may contain normal test levels and ranges only for guidance. Nutrition interventions should be individualized based on many factors, and laboratory values alone are not diagnostic. The clinical judgment of an appropriately educated, experienced individual is the basis for nutrition diagnosis.

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