

Long-Term Care Survey Alert

Resident Nutrition: 3 TIPS FOR IMPROVING RESIDENT DIETARY INTAKE

Residents not eating or drinking enough? Try these simple strategies:

1. Check with the physician about scrapping the therapeutic diet. "The therapeutic diets [such as low fat, diabetic diets or low salt] aren't warranted in the very elderly, especially if they have pressure sores and aren't eating anyway," says **Annette Kobriger**, a long-term care nutritionist in Chilton, WI.

"Heavy use of restricted diets leaves residents feeling discouraged and isolated when they see others getting the foods they want," said federal oversight surveyor **Stephanie Williams**, who spoke recently at the **National Association of Directors of Nursing Administration in Long Term Care** conference in Nashville, TN.

2. Don't mistake a resident's fatigue or distraction for lack of appetite. "You want residents to be independent in self feeding but also to help them when they tire," Williams told directors of nursing.

3. Provide more than one "sippy" cup to residents who require them to drink independently. That way the resident doesn't have to drink all of the milk before moving onto the juice and coffee and will be more likely to consume more fluids and calories. As Williams reminded attendees: "Think if we had to drink all of one beverage in a restaurant before getting a different one."