

MARY WADE



A five star senior community with a tradition of quality healthcare

A MARY WADE WHITEPAPER

Detecting Malnutrition in Older Adults

Malnutrition is a massive health problem in the United States. It is estimated that diseases directly related to nutrition cost the U.S. \$157 billion annually, with older adults accounting for one-third of that number. That annual cost is compounded because it creates a 300% increase in health care costs. That's the bad news.

The Good News

Since malnutrition is, in large part, a self-inflicted malady, it can be addressed with a few changes in our lifestyle and habits.

- Choose to eat healthier meals that include fruits and vegetable, and limit consumption of solid fats and sugars.
- Snack on healthy foods (nuts, fruit, and grains) to get extra nutrients and calories between meals.
- Add dietary supplements as required.
- Of course, get a little exercise.
- Socialize and connect with other people.

Caring for an Older Adult

If you are the caregiver for an older adult and suspect malnutrition, there are a few things you can do evaluate their diet.

- Look in their refrigerator and pantry to see what they are eating.
- Visit them during mealtimes to see what they have prepared.
- Contact your loved ones doctor and let him/her know what you find.
- Check for health problems that might not be readily seen (swelling of the ankles, bruising, rash, or headaches).

If the senior adult is malnourished, what should you do?

- Tell them about the dangers of malnutrition (cancer, diabetes, depression, loss of memory, etc.)
- Talk to them about making healthy food choices and give them some food ideas that would be appealing to them.
- Take them to the grocery store and help pick out nutritional foods they like.
- If they are physically able to tend a garden, help them plan and plant a vegetable or herb garden in their backyard.
- Check in on them often to see how they are doing.
- Of course, take them to their doctor.

If you have any questions or need help, feel free to contact Mary Wade. We have the experience and knowledge necessary to ensure that older adults receive the proper daily nutrition their bodies require. [Mary Wade, where you belong.](#)