STIMULATE APPETITE AND EATING PLEASURE IN NURSING HOME: SMALL LEVERS BUT BIG EFFECTS

Put condiments on the table or introduce variety in the plate are simple actions to stimulate appetite and food intake in nursing homes.

Several authors have stressed the importance of meal environment (dishes presentation, tableware, dining room decor) on the appetite and the satisfaction of institutionalized older people. Unsurprisingly, these authors have reported higher food intake when the dishes are served at the table in refined ambiance or family atmosphere rather than on a meal trays in a hospital setting. However, it is not always easy for a nursing home to rethink in depth the organization of food delivery service or to redecorate the dining room.

The objective of our study was to test the impact of a single environmental factor on eating pleasure and food intake in nursing home. To achieve this, we scrutinized the eating behavior of 42 residents in three different nursing home during 12 meals, by modifying a contextual element at each meal.

The results showed that changing a single contextual element of the meal in nursing homes could be sufficient to improve residents' satisfaction with their meals and increase the quantities of meat or vegetables consumed, as long as this factor had a direct impact on what was going to be consumed (increased variety on the plate, condiments on the table). Factors affecting the context of the meal (names of dishes, decor) proved to be ineffective. Making condiments available at the center of the table resulted in a significant increase of food intake. Mayonnaise, parsley and lemon slices allowed residents to add their personal 'tasty' touch to the dishes served, but also stimulated the discussion around the table. Finally, introducing variety to the plate (two vegetables instead of one) increased the consumption of the main course.

These results offer interesting prospects for tackling the malnutrition risk in nursing homes, and also in terms of research, for continuing to explore the impact of single and low-cost environmental factors on eating pleasure and meal consumption in institutions.

To know more:

Divert C, Laghmaoui R, Crema C, Issanchou S, Van Wymelbeke V & Sulmont-Rossé C (2015). Improving meal context in nursing homes. Impact of four strategies on food intake and meal pleasure. Appetite, 84, 139-147.

Rédaction : Claire Sulmont-Rossé, CSGA

Octobre 2020

PROJET FINANCÉ PAR L'ANR · PROJECT FUNDED BY THE ANR
ANR
RÉPUBLIQUE FRANÇAISE
Liberté
Égalité
Fraternité