

After Acquired Brain Injury - Nutrition Guidelines



Helping to manage the Nutritional needs of people who have had a Brain Injury or Stroke

Nutrition Guidelines following Acquired Brain Injury or Stroke

The dietitian looks after the nutritional needs of people who have had a brain injury or a stroke.

After a brain injury or stroke, some people may have difficulty swallowing.

The Speech and Language Therapist will assess your swallow if necessary, and make recommendations to prevent food and drinks getting into the windpipe and lungs (called aspiration), which can lead to chest infections and pneumonia.

Some people may not be able to swallow safely and may need to be fed through a tube. This may be a temporary measure or may be needed in the longer term. The dietitian will prescribe the correct feed and monitor the person's progress on the feed.

In some cases it may be necessary to modify the texture of food and drinks to make it safer to swallow, for example, pureed foods or thickened drinks.

The dietitian will help make sure the recommended diet is suitable to keep you well nourished.

Weight Loss after Brain Injury

Some people may lose a considerable amount of weight after a brain injury.

The dietitian can advise on the best foods to help reach a healthy weight. Sometimes nutritional supplements may also be recommended.

Weight Gain after Brain Injury

Some people may gain too much weight after brain injury which increases the risk of diseases like Type 2 Diabetes. Weight gain may also make self-care and transfers more difficult. The dietitian can help work out a plan for safe, healthy weight loss, and the physiotherapist can work out a suitable exercise programme to help with weight loss.

Making long-term changes to your diet may be useful in preventing the occurrence of stroke. The dietitian can work out a nutrition plan to address issues like high blood pressure, diabetes and high cholesterol.

If you experience these or any other nutritional problems, please ask any member of the team for a referral to the dietitian.

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The Dietitian's Role as part of the Rehabilitation Team

As part of the Rehabilitation Programme, the Dietitian:

- Assesses patients' nutrition.
- Helps manage individual dietary needs as required.
- Promotes healthy eating habits and provides education on how to stay healthy.
- Provides individual assessments and diet plans as required.

If you have any nutritional problems or concerns, please ask any member of the team for a referral to the dietitian.

