

COBRA Intake and Assessment Food and Nutrition Referrals

**NYS AIDS Institute
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Reasons for a nutrition referral

- Food insecurity (hunger) – Need for food assistance, either meals or groceries or money to buy food
- Individual counseling/medical nutrition therapy (MNT) for nutrition-related complications of HIV disease, such as unexplained weight loss, anorexia, diarrhea, etc.



Reasons for a nutrition referral

- Nutrition education (Choosing healthy foods, weight management, food shopping, etc.)
- Medical nutrition therapy (MNT) for co-morbidities such as high cholesterol, Type 2 diabetes, obesity, hypertension, etc.



Where to refer

- To a nutrition program/Registered Dietician (RD) and/or State licensed nutritionist (CDN) and the individual's Primary Care Physician for medical nutrition therapy follow-up
- To a community nutrition program that provides nutrition education
- To a home-delivered meal, congregate meal, food pantry, or food voucher program for food assistance

All nutrition programs include all of the above for people living with HIV disease.



Who makes referrals to AIDS Institute (AI) Nutrition Initiative (NI) programs

- Family and friends
- Programs in the same agency
- Community based organizations
- Hospitals
- Physicians (required for AI NI home-delivered meals)



Intake referrals

Intake referrals for food assistance are because of food insecurity (hunger) and/or because the client is homebound.

Food assistance programs should never just provide meals/food; nutrition education should always be provided alongside of meals/food. Home-delivered meal programs also provide MNT.



COBRA Intake Form

“Are there debilitating symptoms requiring assistance (homecare, home-delivered meals)?”

Total Monthly Household Income

Food Stamps _____

Does the client have a regular source of income?

Does client have difficulty meeting monthly expenses?

Does the client need assistance obtaining nutritious food?”



Debilitating symptoms requiring home-delivered meals

If the client is homebound (leaving the home requires considerable and taxing effort), the client should be referred to a food assistance program that delivers meals at home.

MNT (nutrition assessment and counseling) is also provided by a RD and/or CDN.



About AI home-delivered meal programs

- Provide meals and nutrition services tailored to persons living with HIV
- Consumer choice (hot or frozen)
- Frequency of meal delivery (daily, twice-weekly, weekly)
- Assessment of eligibility and need
- Low cost to the consumer
- Reduce social isolation
- Holiday meals



Other home-delivered meal programs in the community

Meals on Wheels – Seniors above the age of sixty are eligible if the senior has a physical limitation that requires home-delivered meals or home care.



Income qualifies for Food Stamps

Total Monthly Household Income

Food Stamps _____

Does the client have a regular source of income?

Does client have difficulty meeting monthly expenses?



Food Stamps

If the client does not receive Food Stamps, has no regular income and/or has difficulties meeting expenses, the client may qualify for and should apply for Food Stamps.



Food Stamps

The Food Stamp Program helps people who have little or no income to buy food.

A household can apply by filing an application with the local Department of Social Service.

The nutrition education program for Food Stamp recipients in NYS is called Eat Smart (run by Cornell Cooperative Extension throughout NYS).



Food insecure/hungry

“Does the client need assistance obtaining nutritious food?”

Has the client said that he/she does not have enough food to eat or cannot afford certain foods like fruits, vegetables or meat, or worries about food? If so, the client should be referred to a food assistance program.



Types of food assistance programs

- Congregate meal programs and soup kitchens provide hot meals to people with limited financial resources and/or inadequate cooking facilities.
- Food pantries provide nutritious food to people with limited financial resources.
- Food voucher programs provide vouchers to supermarkets and grocery stores from which the vouchers are purchased.



Other food assistance programs

- WIC food voucher program
- Community food pantries
- In New York City, the New York City Coalition Against Hunger has a map on its website that finds food pantries and soup kitchens anywhere in NYC city.
<http://www.nyccah.org/pantries-kitchens>



Assessment referrals

Assessment referrals are for nutrition counseling to address common nutrition-related complications of HIV disease and poor diet.

Nutrition assessment and counseling (MNT) should always be provided by a RD and/or CDN.



COBRA assessment form

- "Ask client to describe appetite.
- How many meals per day does he/she eat?
- Type of food (fast food, cooks at home)?
- Is the client taking food supplements?
- Has the client experienced a significant weight change recently?
- Does client need a referral to a nutritionist?"



Loss of appetite

Loss of appetite/anorexia is a common symptom of illness and HIV disease.

If client states that he/she has a poor appetite, he/she should be referred to his/her primary care physician and the appropriate and closest available AI nutrition program/ nutritionist.



Unexplained weight loss

Weight loss $\geq 5\%$ over a short time period (1 to 3 months) is associated with increased risk of mortality. Weight loss can occur because of anorexia, diarrhea, nausea, metabolic derangements, etc.

If the client states that he/she has recently lost weight, he/she should be referred to his/her primary care physician and the appropriate and closest available AI nutrition program/nutritionist.



Needs a nutrition referral

- Diabetes?
- Hepatitis C?
- Obesity?
- High blood pressure?
- High blood cholesterol?

The client should be referred to his/her primary care physician and the appropriate and closest available AI nutrition program/nutritionist.



One meal or less per day

If the client states that he or she eats ≤ 1 meal a day, he/she may not be eating enough, and should be referred to the appropriate and closest available AI nutrition program/nutritionist.



Frequent eating out

If the client states that he/she eats fast food everyday or most days of the week, he/she may not have a healthy diet; he/she should be referred to his/her primary care physician and the appropriate and closest available AI nutrition program/nutritionist.



Supplement use

Vitamin and/or mineral supplements

Energy and/or protein supplements may also provide additional vitamins & minerals, for example, Ensure.

If the client states that he/she takes a supplement, he/she should be referred to his/her primary care physician and the appropriate and closest available AI nutrition program/nutritionist.



Overview

