

Providing assistance at mealtimes

Help others to maintain their dignity and independence at mealtimes and make their eating experience more positive.

- **Use picture menus** to help someone decide what meal they would like.
- **Allow more time for slower eaters.** Serve their meals first, or have more than one sitting at each mealtime.
- **Try eating with others** to make mealtimes more sociable and lead by example.
- **Setting the table, wiping down surfaces or calling others to the dining room** are tasks that can help include everybody during the meal preparation.
- **Cut up food into smaller pieces** before taking the meal to the table.
- **Adapted cutlery and crockery** may be easier to use.
- **Load food on to a fork or spoon** and place it in the hand of the person you are helping.
- **Guide cutlery to their mouth or verbally prompt** them to place food in their mouth.
- **Prepare meals that you can eat with your hands** (see the 'Finger foods' resource for more information).
- **Sit down and maintain eye contact** when assisting with feeding.
- **Serve one course at a time** so other foods do not spoil, and keep meals warm on an insulated plate.
- **Use a wipe-clean tablecloth and protect clothing** using napkins on the lap or tucked into the collar.
- **Miss out troublesome mealtimes** and make the most of the time when someone will eat well.



Contact us

If you have any questions or concerns about these information sheets, please contact the Lambeth and Southwark Action on Malnutrition Project on 020 30495422 (Monday to Friday, 9am to 5pm).

For more information leaflets on conditions, procedures, treatments and services offered at our hospitals, please visit www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk/leaflets

Pharmacy Medicines Helpline

If you have any questions or concerns about your medicines, please speak to the staff caring for you or call our helpline.

t: 020 7188 8748 9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

To make comments or raise concerns about the Trust's services, please contact PALS. Ask a member of staff to direct you to the PALS office or:

t: 020 7188 8801 at St Thomas' **t:** 020 7188 8803 at Guy's **e:** pals@gstt.nhs.uk

Language Support Services

If you need an interpreter or information about your care in a different language or format, please get in touch using the following contact details.

t: 020 7188 8815 **fax:** 020 7188 5953

NHS 111

Offers medical help and advice from fully trained advisers supported by experienced nurses and paramedics. Available over the phone 24 hours a day.

t: 111

NHS Choices

Provides online information and guidance on all aspects of health and healthcare, to help you make choices about your health.

w: www.nhs.uk

Become a member of your local hospitals, and help shape our future

Membership is free and it is completely up to you how much you get involved. To become a member of our Foundation Trust, you need to be 18 years of age or over, live in Lambeth, Southwark, Lewisham, Wandsworth or Westminster or have been a patient at either hospital in the last five years. To join:

t: 0848 143 4017 **e:** members@gstt.nhs.uk **w:** www.guysandstthomas.nhs.uk