

Winter Menu Planning Checklist



Is your menu:

Resident focused?

Consider your residents' backgrounds, culture and traditions as well as their likes and dislikes to create a successful menu. Seek their feedback.

Nutritionally balanced?

Are you delivering nutritional value from each recommended food group? Have your menu assessed by a qualified dietician.

Refer to nutrition checklist for menu planning on page 2.

Varied?

Serve a variety of proteins and vegetables for lunch and dinner on any given day to keep menu fresh and interesting. Use different colours and textures to boost the visual appeal of meals.

Seasonal?

Plan around seasonal produce. Quality and price of ingredients is better in season.

On budget?

While choice and variety are critical, staying on budget is equally important. Know how much each recipe costs, review if required.

Named Appropriately?

The wording on your menu is important. Use dish names that are familiar to your residents.

Easy to make by staff?

Are your kitchen staff well trained? Is a chef available on weekends? Do you have suitable kitchen equipment? Consider all these factors when planning your menu.

The right texture?

Plan menus with foods that need less chewing and can be digested easily. Use sauces and dressings to add moisture to meals. Follow speech pathologist recommendations where required.

Accounting for dietary requirements and special needs?

Consider if your residents have any gluten free needs, food allergies, low sugar/fat diets. Are your residents able to use cutlery, do they require meal assistance or are finger foods best?

Daily Menu Planning Checklist

Sourced from the NSW Government's Food and Nutrition Manual for Aged Care Homes.

BREAKFAST

- Hot choices include a protein source such as eggs, bacon, mince, cheese, baked beans
- If only a continental breakfast is served, a protein source such as yoghurt, cheese or peanut butter is offered
- A hot cereal such as rolled oats and at least 3 other varieties of breakfast cereal are available
- High fibre breakfast cereals are offered

MAIN MEALS

- Residents have at least two hot choices at the main meal
- Each hot main meal choice provides 1 serve of meat, chicken, fish or eggs
- Red meat is included on the menu at least once a day
- Vegetarian meals are based on eggs, cheese, tofu, nuts or legumes (e.g. lentils)
- Salad as a main meal includes a serve of meat, chicken, fish or eggs
- A dessert is served with the main meal

LIGHT MEALS

- Residents can choose more than one of hot meal + soup + salad + sandwich
- The hot light meal choice provides 1 serve of meat, chicken, fish or eggs
- Soups are substantial e.g. thick creamy soups, vegetable soups that contain barley, legumes etc. plus meat or chicken
- Salads include 1 serve of protein such as meat, chicken, fish or eggs
- Sandwiches include a serve of protein such as meat, chicken, fish, eggs or baked beans
- A dessert is served with the light meal

MID-MEALS

- High calorie mid-meals are always offered at morning tea & afternoon tea & supper

FRUIT AND VEGETABLES

- The menu provides for five serves of vegetables per day. Note that a salad would be equivalent to one serve of vegetables and soup with lots of vegetables would also be equivalent to one serve of vegetables
- Starchy vegetable serves are approximately 75g per serve (½ cup)
- Other vegetables are approximately 75g per serve (½ cup)
- The menu provides at least 2 serves of fruit daily. This includes fresh, canned, stewed, dried or 100% juice
- If residents prefer to have more fruit and less vegetables, this is accommodated e.g. 3 serves of fruit and 4 serves of vegetables

DAIRY FOODS

- The menu offers at least four serves of dairy foods such as milk, custard, yoghurt and cheese daily
- Calcium rich, milk based desserts are offered twice a day
- If a dessert is low in calcium, 125ml (½ cup) custard, ice-cream or yoghurt is added
- Milk drinks are offered with all main meals and mid-meals
- Drinks, desserts etc. are made with full cream milk and fortified with full cream milk powder where appropriate

BREADS, CEREALS, RICE AND PASTA

- The menu provides four serves of bread, cereal, rice or pasta foods per day
- High fibre breads (multigrain, wholemeal bread or white high fibre) are offered
- Bread is available at the main meal and the light meal