



13 September 2018

ISDI Press release

New WHO and ESPEN International Guidelines Recommend Nutritional Supplementation for Maintaining Health of Older Adults at Risk of Malnutrition

The International Special Dietary Foods Industries (ISDI) supports both the European Society for Clinical Nutrition and Metabolism (ESPEN) and the WHO evidence-based guidelines for nutrition in older adults with or at risk of malnutrition. ISDI endorses the important role oral nutrition supplements can play to help maintain and improve the health, well-being, and functionality of adults 60 and older.

As people age, their health needs often become more complex and chronic. Yet most health systems today are better designed to address acute health conditions rather than to maintain healthy aging and often operate independently of long-term-care systems.

About the ESPEN Guideline

A new [evidence-based guideline](#) from ESPEN identifies that inadequate nutrition contributes to the progression of many diseases, whereas adequate nutrition is an important modulator of health and well-being in older people. Co-authored by 14 scientific experts, the ESPEN guideline provides 82 evidence-based recommendations for nutrition and hydration care in older people. The Guideline reinforces that older people should be routinely screened for malnutrition and provided appropriate nutritional assessment, interventions, and monitoring. This includes use of oral nutrition supplements in community, hospital, and post hospital settings.

“A systematic literature search for systematic reviews and primary studies was performed based on 33 clinical questions in population, intervention, comparison and outcome (PICO) format. Existing evidence was graded according to the Scottish Intercollegiate Guidelines Network (SIGN) grading system. Recommendations were developed and agreed in a multistage consensus process.”¹

About the WHO Guidelines on ICOPE

WHO's [Integrated Care for Older People \(ICOPE\): Guidelines on Community-level Interventions to Manage Declines in Intrinsic Capacity](#) include the recommendation of oral supplemental nutrition with dietary advice for older people with undernutrition and/or at risk of malnutrition. The Guidelines help address the “urgent need to develop and implement comprehensive and coordinated primary health care approaches that can prevent, slow, or reverse declines in intrinsic capacity, and where these declines are unavoidable, help older people to compensate in ways that maximize their functional ability.” The WHO convened expert group based its recommendation on a series of systematic reviews of the highest level of evidence on community-level care for older people.

About ISDI

ISDI is the leading international expert association on special dietary foods, including foods for special medical purpose (FSMP). ISDI members are national and international associations that are active in this sector from more than 20 countries over 6 continents. Our members manufacture and market foods that are formulated, in accordance with applicable Codex Alimentarius standards, to meet the compositional criteria, quality requirement and nutritional needs of the targeted population. The International Special Dietary Foods Industries (ISDI) is the leading international expert association on special dietary foods which brings together national, regional and international associations that are active in this food sector from more than 20 countries over 6 continents. ISDI has a Non-Governmental Organization Observer status before Codex.

¹ Volkert D, et al., ESPEN guideline on clinical nutrition and hydration in geriatrics, Clinical Nutrition (2018), <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clnu.2018.05.024>