
Snapshot

NCP Step 1: Nutrition Assessment

Definition:

Nutrition Assessment is a systematic approach to collect, classify, and synthesize important and relevant data (indicators) needed to identify nutrition-related problems and their causes. This step also includes reassessment for comparing and re-evaluating data from the previous interaction to the next and collection of new data that may lead to new or revised nutrition diagnoses based on the client's status or situation. It is an ongoing, dynamic process that involves initial data collection and continual reassessment and analysis of the client's* status compared to accepted standards, recommendations, and/or goals (comparative standards). This contrasts with nutrition monitoring and evaluation where nutrition and dietetics practitioners use the same data to determine changes in client behavior, nutritional status, and the efficacy of nutrition intervention.

Finding Nutrition Assessment Data:

For individuals, data can come directly from the client through interview, observation and measurements, a health record, and the referring health care provider. For population groups, data from surveys, administrative data sets, and epidemiological or research studies are used.

Terminology for Nutrition Assessment is organized in nine domains (categories):

Food/Nutrition-Related History	Anthropometric Measurements	Biochemical Data, Medical Tests, and Procedures	Physical Exam Findings
<i>Food and nutrient intake, food and nutrient administration, medication and complementary/alternative medicine supplement use, knowledge/beliefs/attitudes, behavior, food and supply availability, physical activity and function, and nutrition related client centered measures</i>	<i>Body height, body weight, body frame, body weight change, body mass, growth pattern indices, and body compartment estimates</i>	<i>Lab data (eg, electrolytes, glucose) and tests (eg, gastric emptying time, resting metabolic rate)</i>	<i>Findings from a physical exam, interview, or the health record.</i>

Client History***	Assessment, Monitoring and Evaluation Tools	Etiology Category	Comparative Standards	Progress Evaluation
<i>Personal health, family and social history</i>	<i>Tools used for health or disease status or risk assessment, reassessment, and monitoring and evaluation</i>	<i>Categories to communicate the type of nutrition diagnosis etiology</i>	<i>What indicator data are compared against</i>	<i>Evaluation of progress toward a nutrition related goal(s) and resolution of a nutrition diagnosis(es)</i>

Use of Nutrition Assessment Data:

Nutrition assessment data, or indicators, are compared to reference standards, recommendations, or goals (comparative standards). These norms and standards may be national, institutional, or regulatory. Nutrition assessment findings are then communicated in nutrition diagnosis (problem) statements and nutrition intervention goal setting.

Critical Thinking Skills:

- Determining important and relevant data to collect
- Determining the need for additional information
- Selecting assessment tools and procedures that match the situation
- Applying assessment tools in valid and reliable ways
- Validating the data

Term Selection and Organization:

The taxonomy or classification system guides the nutrition and dietetics practitioner to logical terminology selection. The terms for Nutrition Assessment and Nutrition Monitoring and Evaluation are combined because the data points are the same or related; however, the data purpose and use are distinct in these two steps of the Nutrition Care Process.

**Client refers to individuals, groups, populations, supportive individuals, and structures.*

****The domains, classes, and terms for Nutrition Assessment and Nutrition Monitoring and Evaluation are combined. Client History terms are used for Nutrition Assessment, but not for Nutrition and Monitoring and Evaluation.*