



Caring for the Nutritional Needs of Older Adults

## **Nutrition and Physical Activity for Older Adults with Failure to Thrive Syndrome**

### **Description:**

Geriatric “failure to thrive” is the result of multiple issues including chronic disease and functional decline. Symptoms include poor food/fluid intake, unintentional weight loss, malnutrition and inactivity. Adverse outcomes may include malnutrition, depression, cognitive impairment and impaired physical function. Studies indicate that it is associated with decreased immunity; and increased rates of infection, incidence of hip fractures, pressure ulcers, surgical mortality, mortality rates and medical costs. The syndrome affects anywhere from 5-35% of community dwelling elders and 25-40% of nursing home residents. The goal of medical interventions should be to improve overall quality of life and functional abilities. This session will focus on the nutrition interventions and also touch on the physical activities that may assist in increasing strength and muscle mass.

### **Objectives:**

The participant will

1. understand the definition of geriatric failure to thrive and the potential poor outcomes that can result from this syndrome
2. be able to implement screening and assessment tools that allow early identification of failure to thrive symptoms such as unintentional weight loss and malnutrition
3. be able to implement interventions for malnutrition, unintentional weight loss, and physical activities to increase strength and muscle mass

**Audience:** Physicians, Nurses, Social Services, Dietetics Professionals

**Audio-Visual Needs:** Data projector, lapel microphone

**Teaching Method:** Lecture, discussion, participation, Power Point slides/handout