

Nutrition Screening in the Community

**For First Nation
Health Care &
Community Partners**

June 2025





Teachings of the 7 Grandfathers

Artwork by Métis artist Chantel Caza

Introductions

Kathleen Gibson

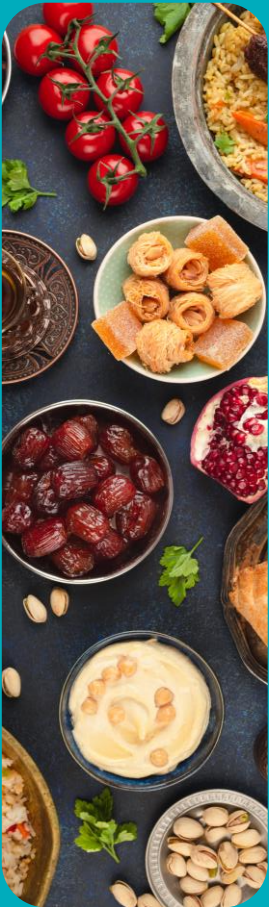
Community Nutrition Advisor,
First Nations and Inuit Health Branch,
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Public Health Nutrition Provincial Lead,
Alberta Health Services





Topics

- Why is nutrition important for healthy aging?
 - Why is nutrition screening in the community important?
 - Screening Tools
 - Additional resources
 - Brainstorm
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Why is nutrition important for healthy aging?

Why is nutrition important for healthy aging?



Stable energy and mood



Strong muscles



Healthy bones



Steady body weight



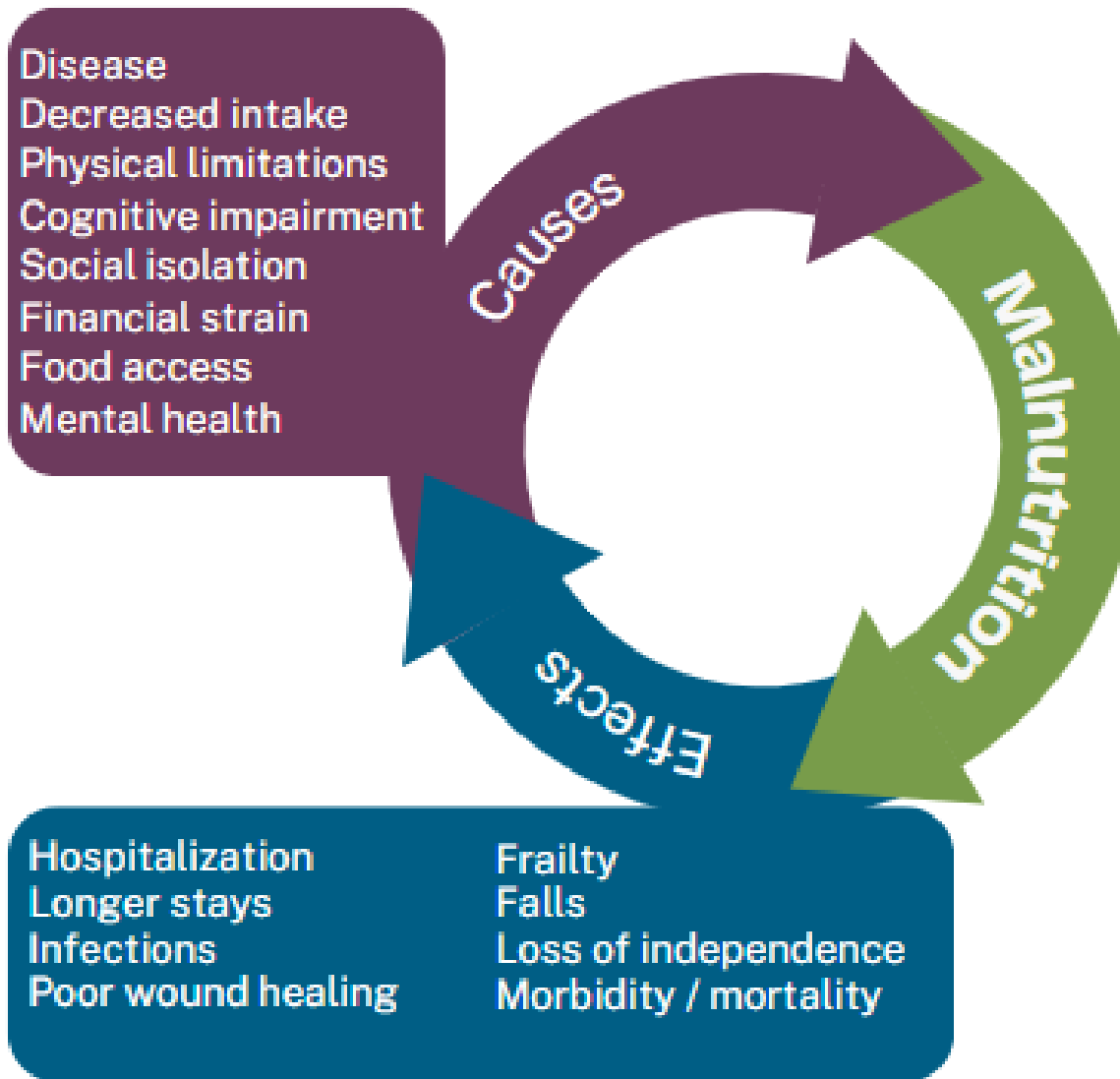
Strong immune system



Lower risk or better management of chronic conditions

Why is nutrition screening in the community important?

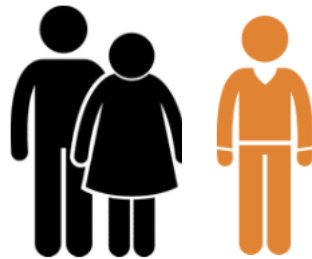
Malnutrition



**Malnutrition =
undernutrition**

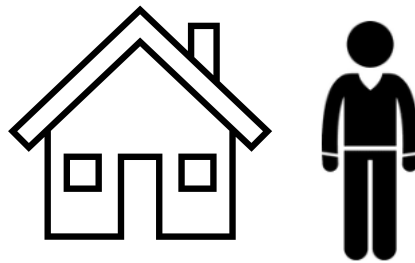
Malnutrition is not always visible and can go undetected and undiagnosed.

1 in 3 older adults living in the
community are at nutrition risk

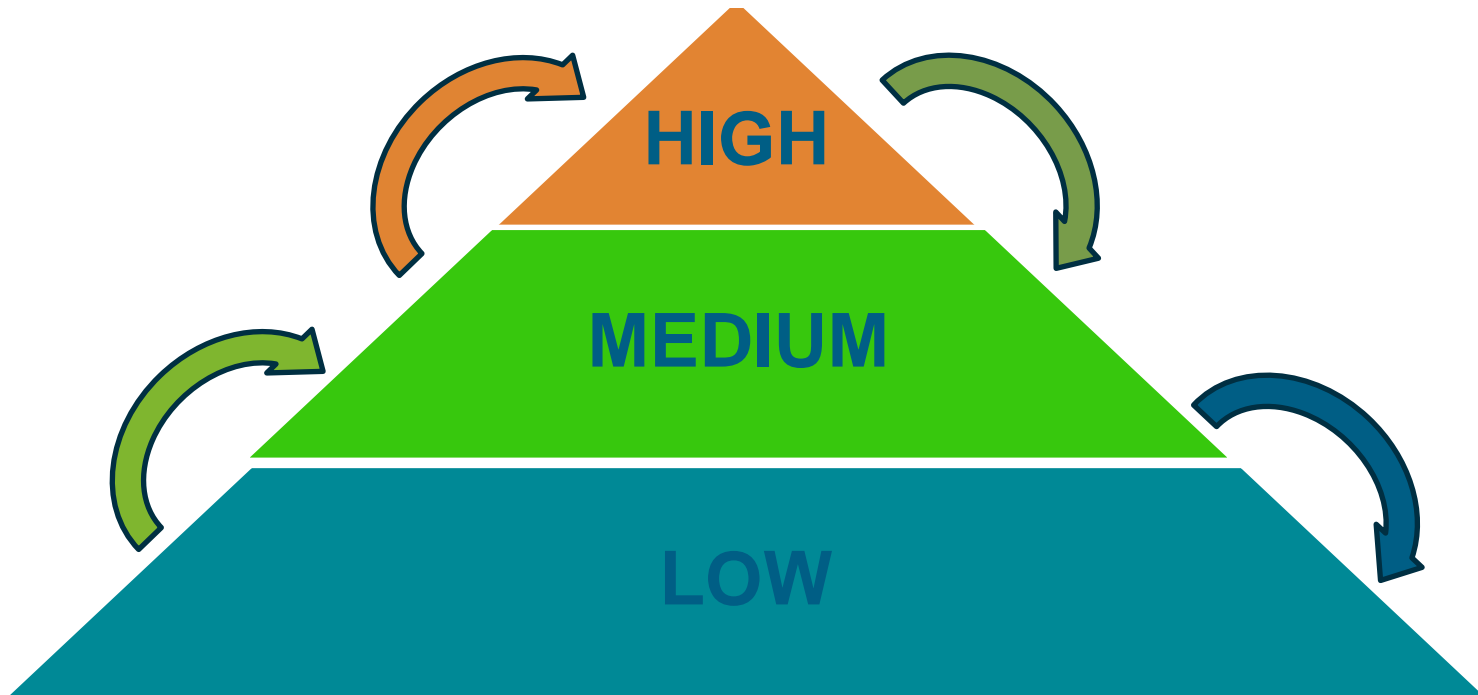


Reference: Ramage-Morin et al 2013

Early identification of nutrition risk



can **prevent** malnutrition, frailty and increase independence.

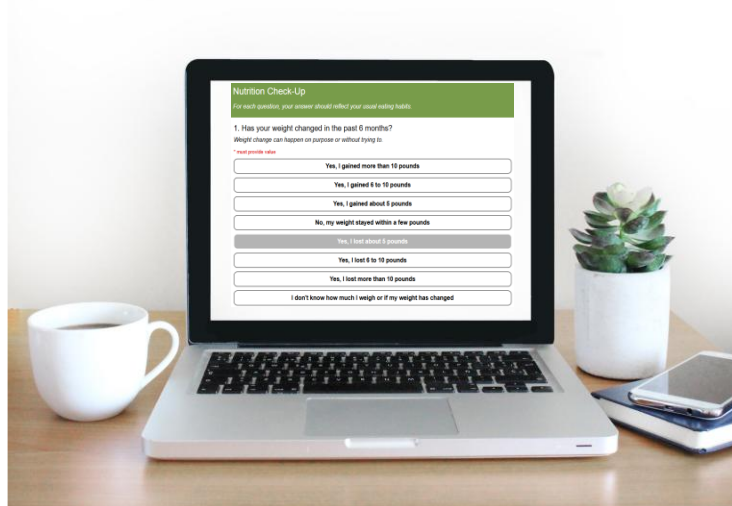


Purpose of Nutrition Screening is to find people who may be at nutrition risk or potentially at nutrition risk.

Life experiences can cause people to move between the risk levels.

Screening Tools

SCREEN-8



Online (NEW)

AHS Nutrition Check-up for Older Adults

Appendix A. SCREEN-8®

SCREEN-8®

Name: _____

Score: 0 Date: _____



For each question, check only 1 box that **describes you best**. Your response should reflect your typical eating habits.

1. Has your weight changed in the past 6 months? (Net weight loss; 1 kg = 2.2 pounds)

- 0 ☐ Yes, I gained more than 10 pounds
 2 ☐ Yes, I gained 6–10 pounds
 4 ☐ Yes, I gained about 5 pounds
 8 ☐ No, my weight stayed within a **few** pounds (Within 3 pounds)
 4 ☐ Yes, I lost about 5 pounds
 2 ☐ Yes, I lost 6–10 pounds
 0 ☐ Yes, I lost more than 10 pounds
 (Net weight lost _____ lbs)
 0 ☐ I don't know how much I weigh or if my weight has changed (Do your clothes fit differently?)

2. Do you skip meals?

- 8 ☐ Never or rarely (Once a week or less; grazing meal pattern)
 6 ☐ Sometimes (2–4 times each week)
 4 ☐ Often (5–6 times each week)
 0 ☐ Almost every day (At least daily; includes having only 2 meals each day)

3. How would you describe your appetite?

- 8 ☐ Very good
 6 ☐ Good
 4 ☐ Fair (Sometimes do not feel like eating at mealtime)
 0 ☐ Poor (Often do not feel like eating at mealtime)

4. Do you cough, choke, or have pain when swallowing food or fluids?

- 8 ☐ Never
 6 ☐ Rarely (Once a week or less)
 4 ☐ Sometimes (2–4 times a week)
 0 ☐ Often or always (5–6 times a week or at least daily)

5. How many pieces or servings of vegetables and fruit do you eat in a day?

Can be canned, fresh, or frozen. (1 serving = med. size fruit, ½ cup of veg/fruit, or 1 cup salad)

- 4 ☐ 5 or more
 3 ☐ 4
 2 ☐ 3
 1 ☐ 2
 0 ☐ Less than 2

6. How much fluid do you drink in a day? (1 cup = 250 mL = 8 ounces)

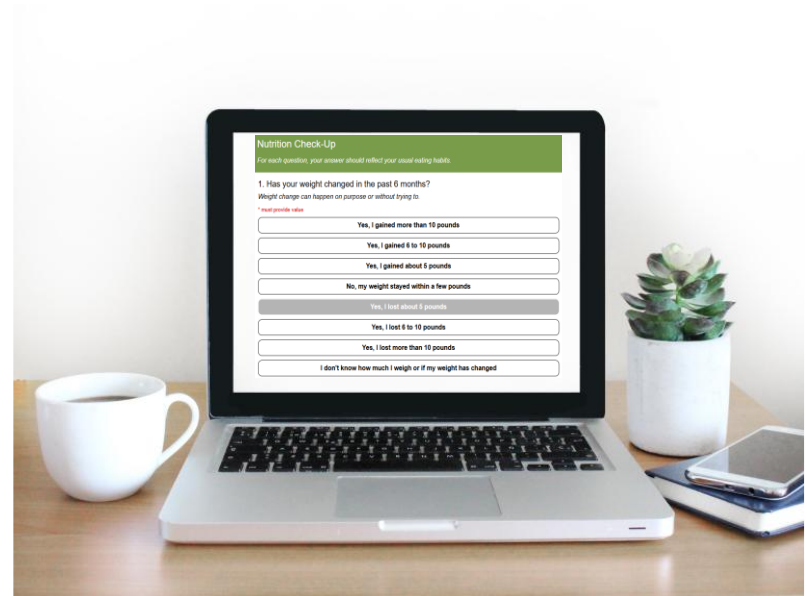
Examples are water, tea, coffee, herbal drinks, juice, and soft drinks, but not alcohol.

- 4 ☐ 8 or more cups
 3 ☐ 5–7 cups
 2 ☐ 3–4 cups
 1 ☐ About 2 cups
 0 ☐ Less than 2 cups

Printable version

Same tool—different formats

- 10 nutrition questions
- Identifies nutrition-risk
 - Low risk
 - Medium risk
 - High risk
- 55 years and older
- Validated by research
- Screen once a year



Nutrition questions

- | |
|-----------------------------|
| 1. Weight change |
| 2. Skipping meals |
| 3. Appetite |
| 4. Difficulty swallowing |
| 5. Vegetable & fruit intake |
| 6. Fluid intake |
| 7. Eating with others |
| 8. Meal preparation |
| |
| 9. Financial strain |
| 10. Access to groceries |

**Nutrition
risk score**

Online only

Demographic questions

Who are you responding for?
Gender
Age
Where you live

Your Nutrition Check-Up Results

Your Result:

30

Your nutrition risk score places you at:



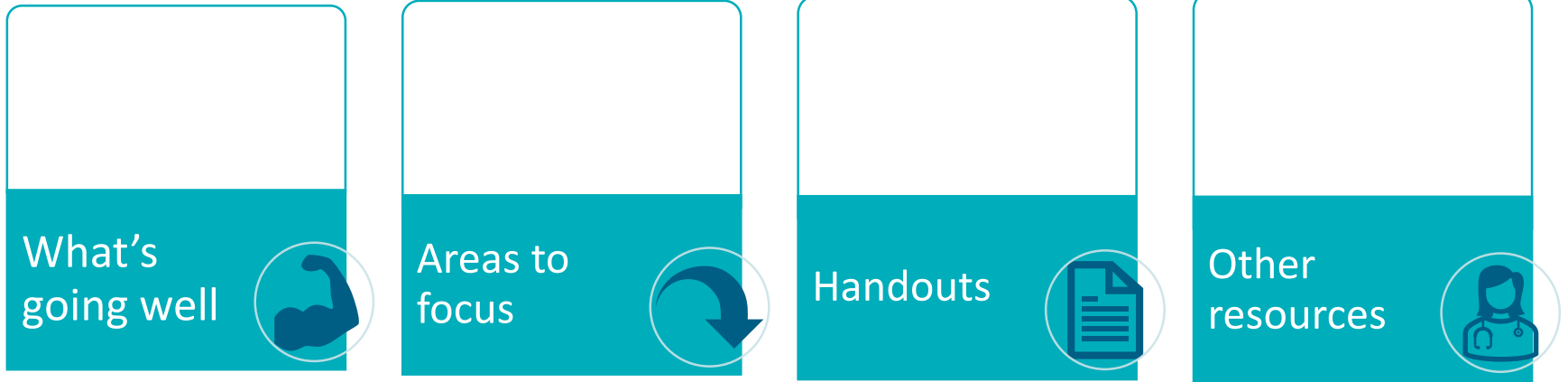
Nutrition Risk	Score
Low Nutrition Risk	37 to 48
Medium Nutrition Risk	22 to 37
High Nutrition Risk	0 to 22

Nutrition Check-up in action



<https://redcap.link/NutritionCheckUp>

Personalized tips and resources



Sample tips and resources

Here's what's going well and helps you to stay strong and healthy:

- Your weight is stable - that's great! Having a stable weight is important as you age.
- Having a good appetite means you are probably getting the food your body needs.
- You don't seem to have any swallowing difficulties.

Here are some tips and handouts for the areas where you may want to focus a bit more attention:

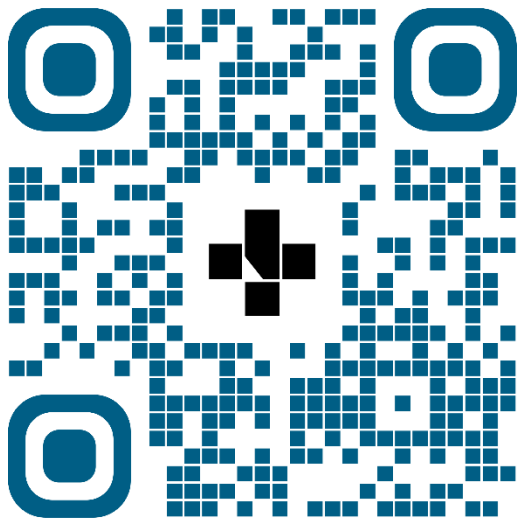
Tip: You might not be eating enough vegetables and fruits. Canada's Food Guide recommends filling half your plate or bowl with vegetables and fruits at every meal.

Handout: [Canada's Food Guide](#)

Handout: [Eating More Vegetables and Fruit](#)

How to access the Nutrition Check-up?

Where to find the Nutrition Check-up?



ahs.ca/OlderAdultNutrition



Nutrition for Older Adults

Healthy Eating Starts Here

Good nutrition is an important part of maintaining health and independence. It helps to:

- Give you energy.
- Keep your muscles and bones strong.
- Prevents or lowers your risk of disease like type 2 diabetes and heart disease.

Providers can visit [Nutrition Screening Information for Health Professionals](#).

Quick Reference

- [Healthy Eating Starts Here](#)
- [Have a Nutrition Question?](#) - speak to a dietitian
- [Free Food in Alberta](#)
- [Learning About Food Insecurity: Not Having Enough Money for Food](#)

ON THIS PAGE:

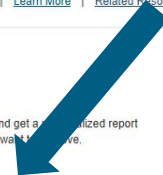
[Nutrition Check-up](#) | [Recipes & Cooking](#) | [Learn More](#) | [Related Resources](#)

Nutrition Check-up

Want to check on your nutrition?

Answer questions about your eating habits and get a personalized report about what is going well and what you might want to improve.

Take the [Nutrition Check-up for Older Adults](#)



What Albertans are saying

“I didn’t realize my protein intake was low”

“Helped make me aware I am high risk, and how to help improve my eating habits”

“Very easy to use and was helpful”

“Let me know I need to eat more”

“Gave me places to go where I can get the info I need”

What partners have said

“It is an upstream approach, and we want to sustain this”

“It is a great conversation starter”

“Initially the feeling was “not another thing”, but we don’t think that way now”

“We find out so much more than just nutrition; it identifies gaps”

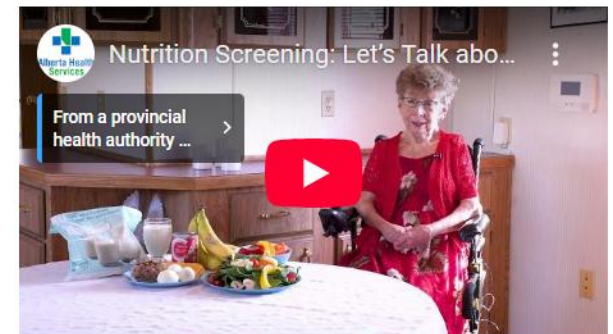
Additional resources

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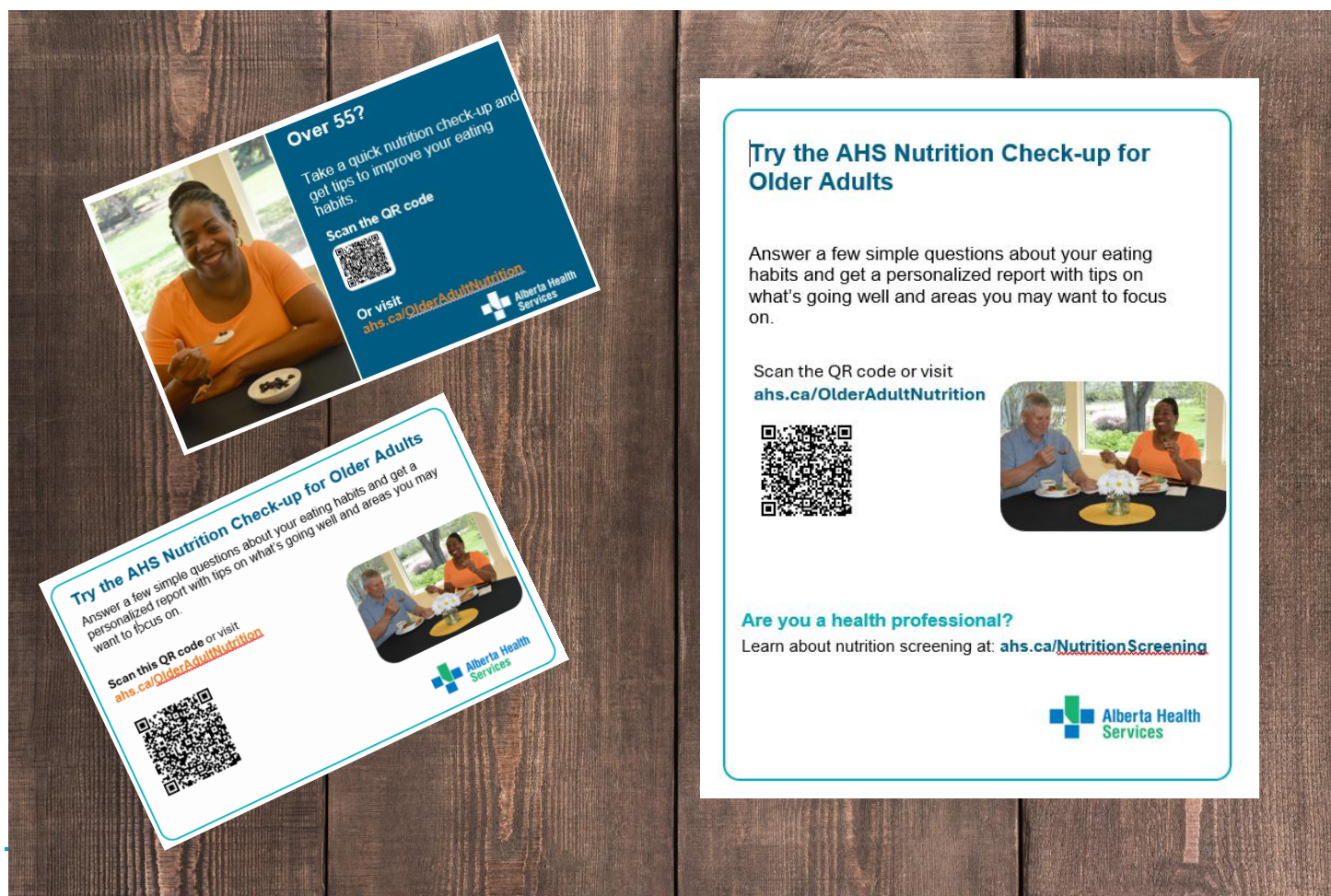
ahs.ca/olderadultnutrition (public)

ahs.ca/nutritionscreening

- Nutrition Screening for Older Adults: Community Guide to Success
- Paper copies (SCREEN-8©)
- Training videos



Nutrition Check-up promotional items



Brainstorm/discussion



1. Where can you see screening happening in your community?
 2. What resources can you share with people in your community?
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Questions





Thank you!

For support in organizing a community event, contact Kathleen Gibson at Kathleen.Gibson@sac-isc.gc.ca

For information about the Nutrition Check-up for Older Adults tool, contact sarah.franknichols@ahs.ca

References

1. Ramage-Morin P, Garriguet D. Nutritional risk among older Canadians, Statistics Canada, Catalogue no. 82-003-X, Health Reports, 2013;24(3): 3-13.
2. Curtis, L. J., Bernier, P., Jeejeebhoy, K., Allard, J., Duerksen, D., Gramlich, L., et al. (2017). Costs of hospital malnutrition. *Clinical Nutrition*, 36(5), 1391–1396. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.clnu.2016.09.009>