

Certain mealtime practices at hospitals may help patients eat better

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New research confirms that hospital patients often eat poorly, and that the hospital mealtime environment may contribute to this problem.

When investigators observed 601 meals across 4 hospital wards during 2013, they found that mealtime interruptions did not significantly impact [patients'](#) meal intake, but how patients were positioned—ideally sitting up or out of bed—and whether they received mealtime assistance in a timely manner had impacts on meal intake.

"Hospital mealtimes can be busy and chaotic for staff and patients alike. This study suggests that focusing on correctly positioning and helping patients with their meal can make a difference to the amount that patients [eat](#), which ultimately may help them on their way to a faster recovery," said Dr. Adrienne Young, lead author of the *Journal of Advanced Nursing* study.

More information: Adrienne Young et al. Assisted or Protected Mealtimes? Exploring the impact of hospital mealtime practices on meal intake, *Journal of Advanced Nursing* (2016). [DOI: 10.1111/jan.12940](https://doi.org/10.1111/jan.12940)

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