

agMOOCs

Principles of therapeutic diet

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Welcome back to the present class and last class we have seen how the normal diet is modified into a therapeutic diet in terms of its various conditions, like the temperature, the consistency, and how it is fed to an individual, what is the time interval that has to be taken, what are the nutrition care that has to be taken. And so we should now also know what are the principles that are involved in therapeutic nutrition.

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What is diet ??

Diet is the sum of food consumed by a person or other organism



So what is a diet? The diet is a sum of food that is consumed by a person or any organism. Whatever food we consume is the diet.

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Diet therapy







It is concerned with recovery from illness by giving good diet and prevention of disease



And diet therapy, it is concerned with recovery of illness by giving a good diet. So the therapeutic nutrition is the clearing of the disease using food, and you can also prevent the disease by using good food, by giving them nutritionally adequate diet so that they do not go into any deficiency symptom or curing the disease by giving the whatever nutrient is required for the person in extra amounts or reducing the specific nutrients. So by changing the modification of the diet, you can treat a person which is called as diet therapy.

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What is therapeutic diet

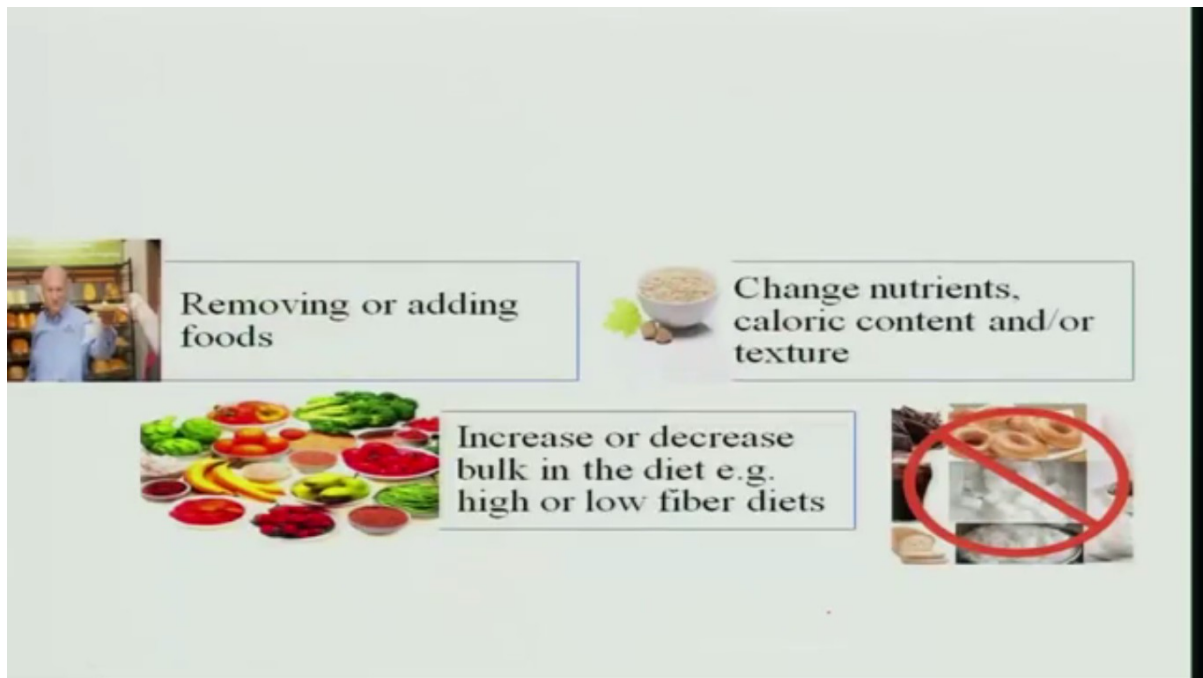
-  **Planned diet**
-  **Modification of normal diet**
-  **Used to supplement the medical or surgical treatment**
-  **Prescribed by doctor and planned by dietician**

Now therapeutic diet is a planned diet, because we know the condition of the patient, and we plan the diet, and it is nothing but a modification of normal diet. You prepare a normal diet and the same normal diet you change in terms of the consistency, you change in terms of its, I mean, temperature and other aspects and give to the person. It becomes a therapeutic diet.

Then used to supplement the medical or surgical treatment. Sometimes medicine itself is not sufficient. When the person is kept on giving medicines, he may go into undernutrition. So in order to supplement the medical treatment and surgical treatment, you always give them a very good diet so that they recover very fast and get back their normal nutritional status.

And this is prescribed by a doctor. Based on the condition of the patient, the doctor prescribes what type of a diet, I mean, how much calories? Whether the calories have to be increased? Whether the protein has to be increased? And based on that, the diet is planned by a dietician.

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Now you can plan a therapeutic diet only by adding or removing foods. So whatever is not being tolerated by the individual is removed and whatever is tolerated, it is increased so that the nutrient balance is maintained.

Then change of nutrients, and calorie content or texture. Based on the condition of the person, suppose he is surgically operated patient, then we give him a liquid diet, which consists of nutrients, but at the same time it is not giving a stress to the gastrointestinal system.

And suppose he is a obese person. Then we give him a low calorie food, but the other nutrients are maintained in the same levels. So the protein, and other vitamins and minerals are maintained at the same level because he should not go into deficiency of the other nutrients. The only nutrient that is reduced is energy.

And suppose the person is with anaemia. You start giving him foods which are rich in iron apart from the normal diet so that his iron status in the blood increases and this can be used in supplementation to the iron supplements that are given so that there is a fast recovery if there is severe anaemia. Similarly, based on the condition, we keep on changing the diet.

Then increase or decrease in the bulk of the diet. Bulk of the diet is increased or decreased by the fibre content of the diet. Suppose the person has diarrhoea. Diarrhoea means there is a frequent passage of loose stools. So the stool has to become hard. Therefore, you give him a soluble fibre, which will form a gel and water uptake is there. There is soft stools. And when there is constipation, it means the water content of the stools is very less, the stools have become very hard, under such condition you give them a high-fibre diet so that the stools become softer and then they become very loose and easy to pass.

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Principles

- To maintain good nutritional status
- To correct deficiencies
- To afford rest to the body
- To metabolize the nutrients
- To make changes in body weight when necessary

Then principles to be followed in a therapeutic diet are you have to follow a good nutritional status. Whether the person is sick or he is ill, suppose the person has become sick for 10 days, after 10 days you should not see a person who has become very weak. So if you give him proper nutrition at the end of the disease condition also, the patient will come back as a normal individual. So you have to maintain the nutritional status of an individual and therapeutic diet is only to correct the deficiency. It is not a medicine. So as I said it is only a modification of normal diet. So it has to correct the nutrient deficiencies.

Then at the same time, you cannot give heavy food with high fat and high spicy foods so that it irritates the gastrointestinal system. It should give rest to the body. So food should be planned such a way that it affords rest to the body.

Then it also helps in the metabolism of nutrients. Otherwise, the metabolism is affected and again the nutrients are not absorbed in a proper manner. So it should help in the metabolism of nutrients. Then to make the necessary changes in body weight when necessary. Either to decrease the weight or increase the weight, accordingly, you change the nutrient content and give the individual.

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Purpose of therapeutic diets

Regulate amount of food

Assist body organs to maintain normal function

Aid in digestion

To improve specific health conditions

Increase or decrease body weight

Modify the intervals of feedings

And purpose of therapeutic diets, one is to regulate the amount of food. We cannot drastically decrease the amount of food for an individual. So in order to regulate the amount of food, you change the pattern of food, and you also give more number of times so that the amount of food does not decrease when the person is sick.

Then it should assist the body organs to maintain the normal function. So there should not be any weakness, and it should not affect any organ so that the normal function is detained or decreased. Then it should aid in digestion. That means it should be a very soft and very mild in condition so that it aids in easy digestion because when the person is sick, the secretion of the juices also becomes sluggish.

Then it should improve the specific health condition. Suppose he is having the iodine deficiency, you give him foods rich in iodine along with the medicine. Then anaemia, you give whatever is required. Suppose there is B Complex deficiency, you supplement with B Complex rich foods so that he can come over from the deficient stage.

Then increase or decrease in body weight and modify the intervals of feeding based on the condition whether if the person is not able to eat food, give more number of times. You can give one hourly to slowly it can be decreased to four hours to five hours interval of feeding.

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Significance

Useful in managing disease

Promote greater resistance to specific conditions

Prevention or supplemental treatment

Now the significance of the therapeutic diet is it can be -- it is a very useful tool for managing disease, because if you don't give proper diet, the sickness is prolonged to a more longer period so that for the person to come back to his normal nutritional status. Then promote greater resistance to the specific condition. If you give him a good food rich in protein, and vitamins and minerals, the state of infection and the resistance to the infection increases. So he can recover very fast.

Then prevention or supplemental treatment. Now diet can be used either to prevent the disorders like we talk about the bad habits of food. You eat a proper balanced diet with energy balance. You can prevent obesity. But if you start eating whatever is available, it is inevitable that obesity will occur. And similarly, cancer. If the lifestyle changes can be changed a little, the dietary pattern can be changed a little, maybe you can prevent the cancer occurrence also. So heart disorders can be prevented, so many disorders can be prevented by giving a good therapeutic diet.

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Conclusion

So to conclude, we can say you should reduce the intake of spices. Then reduce the, I mean, the supplements which are not recommended by a physician. Instead you take food as a supplement, and then reduce the amount of fat that is taken in, and you can also give the change in the consistency of the foods and improve the therapeutic diet. So if you follow the good principles of therapeutic diet, even if a person is sick for a longer time, the moment he recovers from the sickness, he can come back to his normal nutritional status within a very few days and resume his normal duties.

Thank you.