

Effects of oral nutrition supplements in persons with dementia: A systematic review

A recent systematic review has evaluated the effects of Oral Nutritional Supplements (ONS) on persons with dementia. People living with dementia are at an increased risk of malnutrition which has consequences for their day-to-day life and may accelerate disease progression.¹

ONS can help improve nutritional intake and improve complication such as pressure sore, pulmonary embolism and confusion in those with insufficient dietary intake.

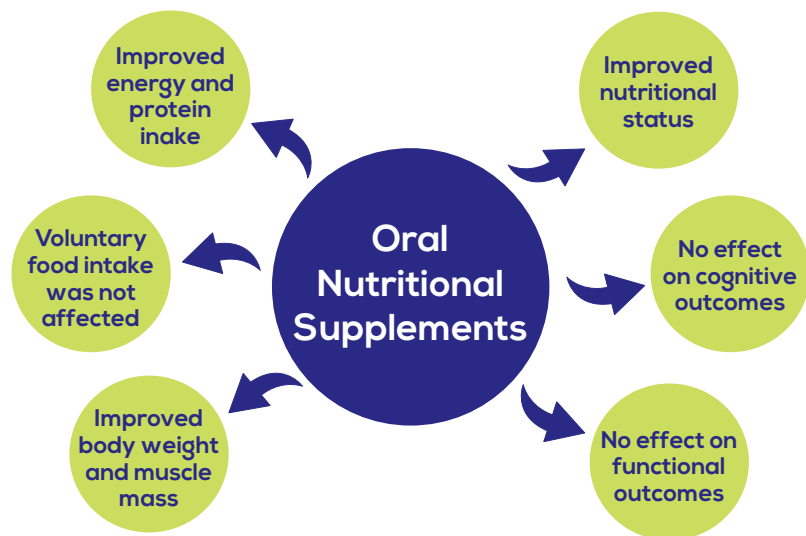


Because of rapid aging of the population, the number of people living with dementia worldwide is projected to triple in the next 30 years, and the socioeconomic burden of dementia to increase accordingly^{2,4}

Summary of results

The paper looked at 10 studies, reporting on 9 clinical trials (n= 407) conducted in hospitals, aged care facilities or homes. The study addressed the effect of ONS on nutritional, functional and cognitive outcomes. **Energy intake increased from between 201 and 600 kcal without affecting food intake. Body weight, muscle mass and nutritional biomarkers improved in the intervention group.** No effect was reported for cognitive or functional outcomes.¹

The effect of Oral Nutritional Supplements on persons living with dementia.¹



Conclusions and implications for practice

This study adds to the evidence that oral nutritional supplements can help improve the nutritional status of those living with dementia without significantly effecting oral food intake.¹ ESPEN recommends the use of ONS in those living with dementia (Evidence grade: High).³ Compliance may be improved with offering a variety of flavours, tailored to patient preferences alongside smaller volumes, dispersed through the day^{1,3}

References:

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