

Did You Know? Licensed and Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (LD/RDNs) Play a Crucial Role in the COVID-19 Pandemic

Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT) is a therapeutic approach to treating medical conditions and their associated symptoms via the use of a specifically tailored nutrition devised and monitored by an RDN.

One of the most vital, (and often less mentioned), member of the critical care team is the RDN. Outcome and survival are largely dependent on the patient's nutritional status making MNT critical to optimal care.



Many COVID-19 patients are being placed on mechanical ventilators to provide oxygen to the lungs. Traditional feeding is not possible while on a ventilator.



Many COVID-19 patients require ventilator support for up to 20 days. Without proper nutrition and hydration they will be unable to fight the infection and survive.



Patient's on mechanical ventilators have extremely high calorie and protein needs which further increases their risk of malnutrition and therefore, their survival rate.

RDN/LDs

Assess the patient's nutrition status and determine their unique nutrition needs.



Implement and maintain the patient's unique nutritional needs through enteral nutrition (tube feeding).



Monitor the patient. Because some patients are situated in the prone (face down) position, the RDN must manage the risk of aspiration and other adverse outcomes.



Evaluate the patient and determine if their nutritional needs are being met. In some cases, they may need to transition to total parenteral nutrition (TPN) to bypass the gut and/or to supplement the enteral feeding.



Transition the patient off of tube feeding and specialized nutrition support therapy to oral diet.

