



Service Priorities and Programmes
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Small Change, Big Impact: Improving Patients' Oral Intake by Condiment Sachet

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Introduction

Maintaining an optimal nutritional status plays a crucial role in improving patient clinical outcomes. Insufficient oral intake due to loss of appetite is common during illness. Poor acceptance of hospital meals, particularly related to food taste, can make it more challenging for patients to achieve adequate oral intake.

Objectives

To evaluate the effectiveness of soy sauce sachet in improving the oral intake of patients on rehabilitation in Tai Po Hospital.

Methodology

A CQI project was conducted between 4 September 2017 and 5 January 2018. Patients of Department of Medicine & Geriatrics and Department of Orthopaedics Rehabilitation with anticipated length of stay for at least three days and suboptimal oral intake (

Result

Eighteen patients were recruited (5 female, mean age 81 years, range 53-96; 13 male, mean age 75 years, range 57-97). On Day 2 and Day 7 respectively, 72% (n=13) and 50% (n=9) patients reported they had used soy sauce sachet. Patients' reported meal intake on Day 2 was significantly higher than that on Day 0 ($p=0.002$), and the effect sustained until Day 7 ($p=0.08$).

Supply of soy sauce sachet help improve oral intake of patients on rehabilitation. Other table condiments such as salt, pepper and sesame oil may also be useful to improve the flavor of hospital meals. Further study with larger sample size is warranted.