

GREEK FOOD CULTURE-Considerations for Aged Care Service Providers



It is important to establish each person's food preferences, cooking style and the timing of meals. This information can then be recorded as part of a Greek-speaking aged care recipient's care plan in both the community and in residential care.

Although most cultures use a variety of cooking methods, some cultures have a particular preference. People from a particular culture will acquire specific tastes for food, such as sweet and salty for the Chinese or hot and spicy for Latinos. **Greek food** is simple, it's colourful and it's very nutritious. It relies heavily on fresh foods, vegetables, grilled meats and fish, boiled vegetables and stews/soups using beans, pulses, meat and vegetable. Many well-known Greek dishes are in fact part of the larger tradition of the food of the Ottoman Empire (which ruled in Greece for 400 years), with classic dishes such as Moussaka, Börek and Tzatziki having Arabic, Persian and Turkish roots.

The more familiar the meals are to the resident, the happier and more compliant the resident will be as it contributes to their sense of belonging. Familiar/culturally specific foods reduce or avoid unnecessary anxiety about an unknown/unwanted food and they improve the resident's appetite for eating.

There are some essential ingredients that should be available in your facility's kitchen to cater to the tastes of your Greek resident.

They include: Extra Virgin OLIVE OIL, GARLIC, LEMON, DRIED OREGANO, FETTA CHEESE.

These five ingredients can dress up a Greek salad, be added to boiled/steamed vegetables or be added to soup, a roast or a grilled meat dish. Red-ripe tomatoes, olives and filo pastry are also a must have in any Greek kitchen.

White crusty bread is usually served with all Greek meals, especially to soak up the olive oil, meat juices and sauces or to break up into a soup.

Greek cooking could not exist without olive oil. Many of the traditional dishes are called "olive oil" dishes because copious amounts of extra virgin olive oil are used during cooking or added to the cooked food to finish the meal, such as boiled or grilled vegetables.

References/Links

<http://bit.ly/16xWX1P> About Greek Food

<http://bit.ly/15rxhKp> Greek Seasonings