



Aging Appetites:

Coping with Hunger & Taste Changes in Older Adults



Presented By:

Kitty Broihier, MS, RD, LD

Guiding Stars Scientific Advisor,
NutriComm, Inc.

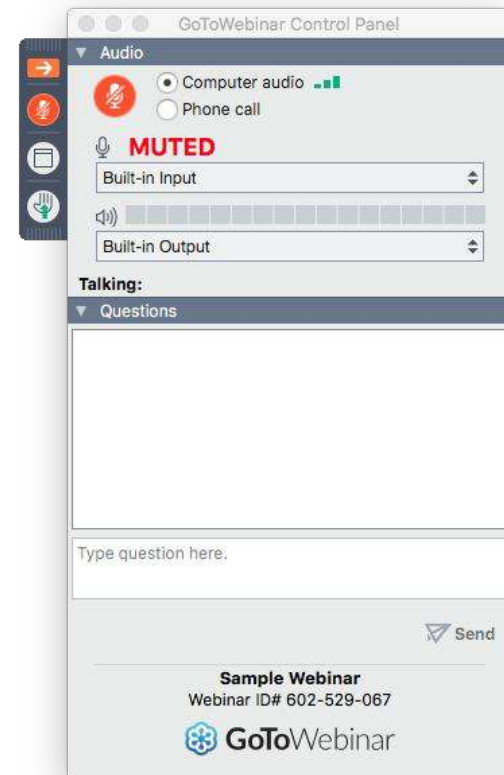
Allison Stowell MS, RD, CDN

Guiding Stars Dietitian



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Presenters



Kitty Broihier, MS, RD, LD

Scientific Advisory Panel

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Allison J Stowell MS, RD, CDN

Dietitian

Guiding Stars Licensing Company



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Objectives

- Discuss the connection between aging and shifts in appetite and taste preferences
- Explain how taste & appetite changes influence nutritional status, overall wellness and other health factors as we age
- Provide strategies for compensating for appetite and taste changes in older adults to improve food intake and nutritional status
- Share science and education gained with patients, clients, colleagues, students and others to increase their knowledge and understanding of senior nutrition



Introduction

- By 2030, the number of people in the world aged 60+ is predicted to grow by 56% (from 901 million to 1.4 billion) ⁽¹⁾
- Diet & nutrition → age-related/chronic disease burden
- Approximately 21% of seniors are marginally food insecure (13.5 million) ⁽²⁾

- (1) [United Nations Dept of Economic and Social Affairs, 2015](#)
(2) [2016 State of Senior Hunger in America](#)





What is appetite?

ap·pe·tite (noun)

a **natural** desire to satisfy a bodily need, especially for food

hun·ger (noun)

feeling of discomfort or weakness caused by lack of food, coupled with the desire to eat

a severe lack of food

a strong desire or craving



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Appetite Regulation

- Short & long term appetite regulation
- Complex integration of hormones (homeostatic system)
- Pleasure signals (hedonic system)

Nursing Older People, 2015





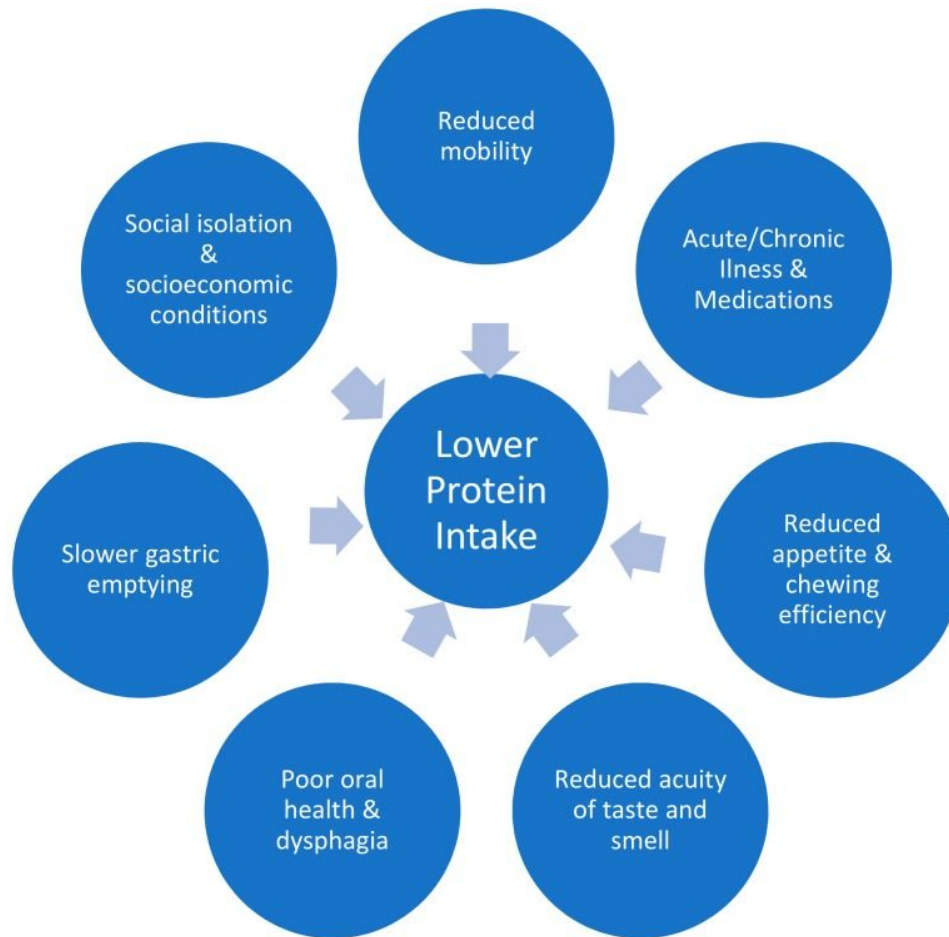
When appetite decreases...

Energy intake is typically reduced in the elderly compared to younger people (decreases 25% between 40-70 yrs) ⁽¹⁾

Decreased appetite = ↓ total energy, protein and vitamin intake (and ↑fats, sweets, sodas) = predisposition to increased illness ⁽²⁾

So when does a small appetite become a big problem?

- 1) Digestive Diseases 2007
- 2) JAND 2002



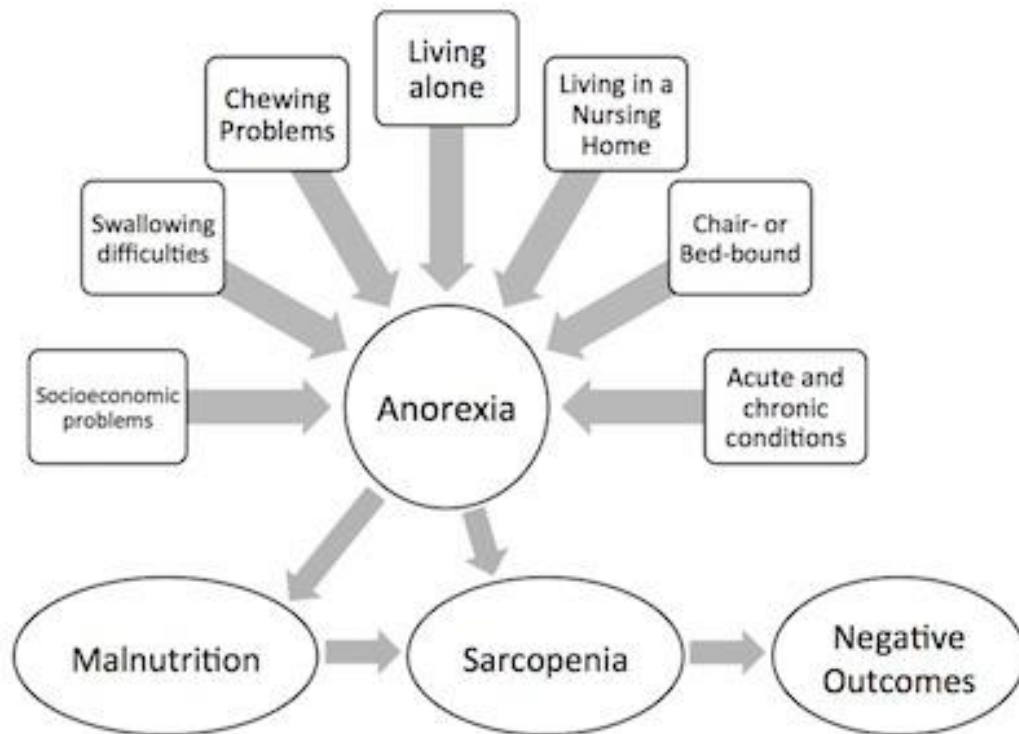


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Anorexia of aging

“Anorexia of aging” - a multifactorial condition (1)

(1) [Neurobiology of Aging 1988](#)
(2) [Nutrients, 2016](#)





Impact of appetite decline

- Nutrition deficiencies ⁽¹⁾
- Immunity ⁽²⁾
- Mental Acuity
- Frailty
- Wound healing ⁽³⁾
- Overall health

1) [Euro J Clin Nutr, 2002](#)

2) [Nutrients, 2018](#)

3) [Journal of Community Nursing, 2018](#)





Aging appetites: Physiological

Aging of peripheral appetite signalling molecules

- ↓ amount of and sensitivity to hunger hormones (ghrelin and NPY)
- ↑ satiety and anorectic hormones (CCK, leptin, PYY)

Aging of the gut

- ↓ gastric emptying and motility
- ↑ tendency for constipation

Aging of sensory perception

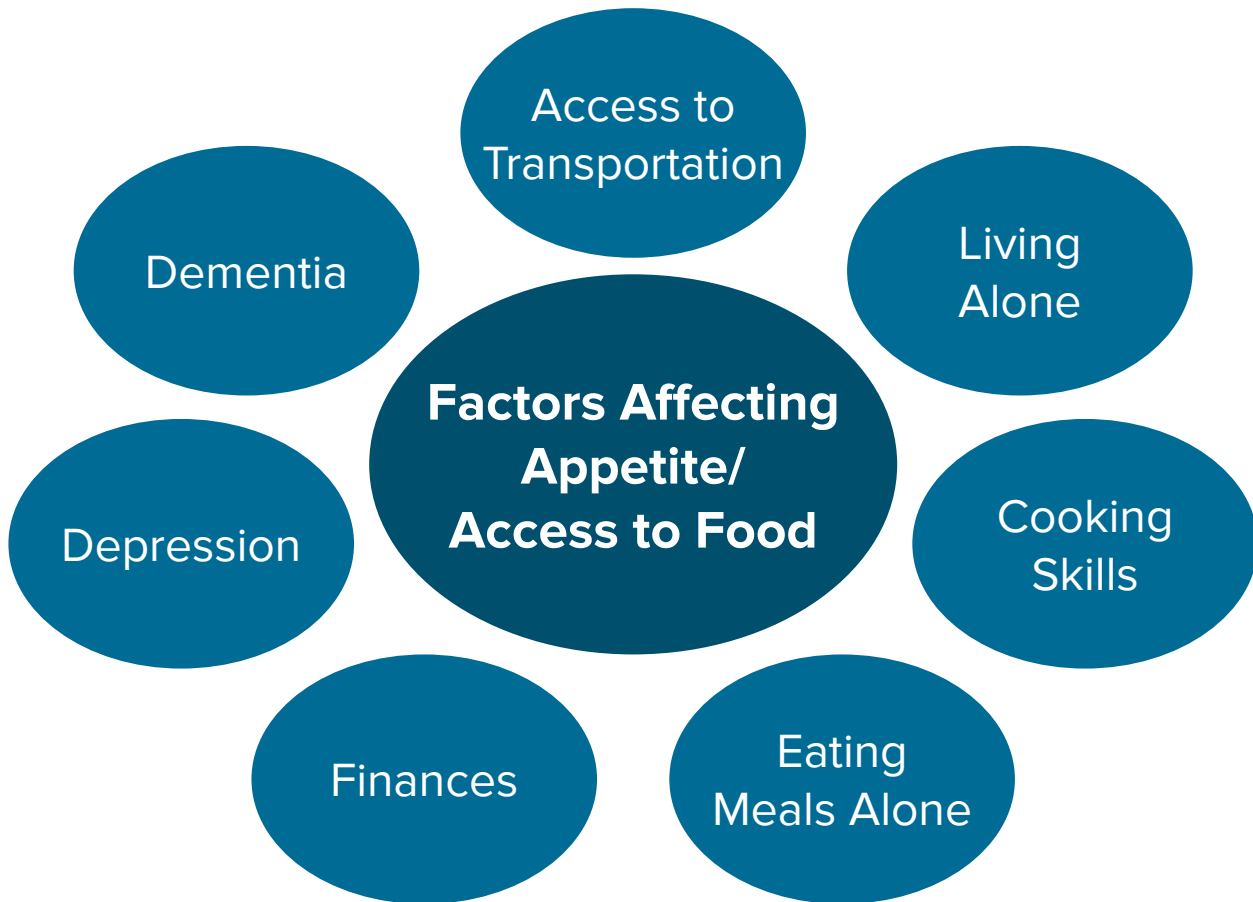
- ↓ olfaction and vision
- ↓ salivary secretion and number of taste buds

Nutrients 2019, Nutrients 2016, Clin Nutr 2010, Best Pract Res Clin Gastroenterol 2009



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Aging appetites: Psycho-social





Aging appetites: Pharmacological

Medication can decrease/alter taste and appetite

- Decreased appetite
- Ageusia (absence of taste)
- Hypogeusia (decrease in taste sensation)
- Dysgeusia (alteration of taste, metallic or bitter)
- Dry mouth
- Decreased GI motility
- Olfactory disturbances

Polypharmacy

SA J of Clin Nutr, JAND 2002



Managing a Poor Appetite

Identify and treat underlying causes

- Chronic gastritis ⁽¹⁾
- Gut health ⁽²⁾
- Address oral hygiene and dentition

(1) [AJCN, 2009](#)

(2) [Nutrition & Healthy Aging, 2018](#)



Modification of Meal/Pattern



- Size
- Frequency
- Composition
- Texture
- Presentation
- Finger foods
- Liquid nutritional supplements



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Modification of Eating Environment

- Daylight
- Limit distractions
- Soft music
- Familiar sounds
- Community feeding vs alone





Flavor Enhancement Techniques

Ingredients

- Extracts, flavors
- Strongly flavored foods (garlic, vinegars, sharp cheese)
- Concentrate fruit sauces/jams
- Herbs, spices, dry rubs
- Sugar
- Fat
- Salt, monosodium glutamate (umami)





Nutritional Enhancement Techniques

- Packing nutrition into fewer kcals can be challenging
- Fortify foods to increase kcals/nutrients
- Limit volume while maximizing benefit



Colorful Veggie Slaw - 2 Guiding Stars



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The formula **credits** a product's score for:

Vitamins
Minerals
Dietary Fiber
Whole Grains
Omega-3s



The formula **debits** a product's score for:

Saturated Fat
Trans Fat
Added Sodium
Added Sugar
Artificial Colors

The resulting score represents a ***weighted total***



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One Guiding Star indicates good nutritional value



Good

Two Guiding Stars indicate better nutritional value



Better

Three Guiding Stars indicate the best nutritional value



Best



Resources

[National Council on Aging: Malnutrition Screening & Assessment Tools](#)

[National Institute on Aging](#)

[USDA: Older Adults Resource Guide](#)

[Guiding Stars Webinar: The Rise of Mini Meals](#)

[Guiding Stars Webinar: Dodging Dehydration](#)

[Position Paper of the AND: Food and Nutrition Programs for Community-Residing Older Adults](#)

[NIH Consumer Info on Taste/Smell Changes with Age](#)

[National Foundation to End Senior Hunger](#)



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Q&A



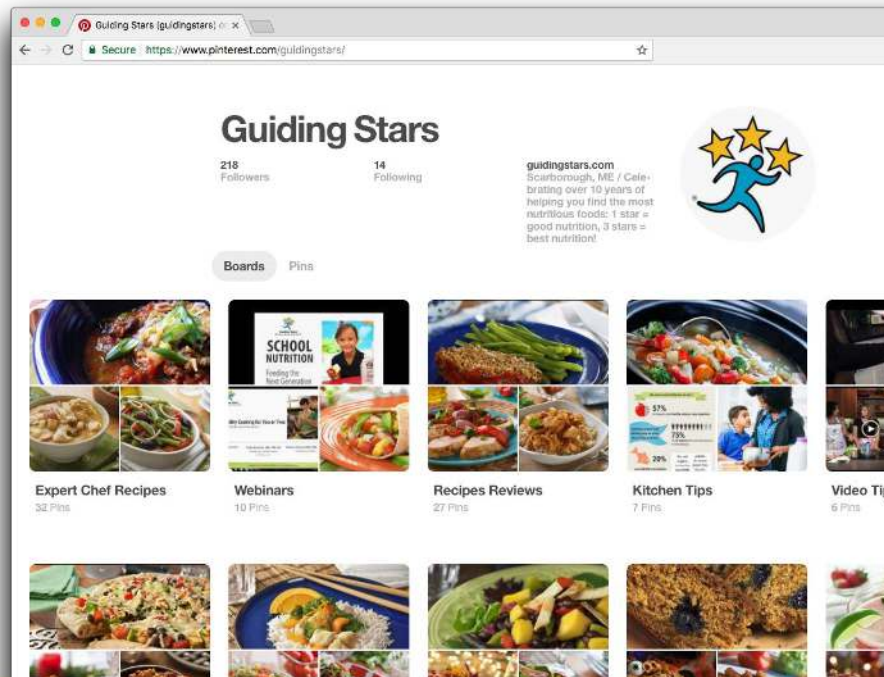


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Thank you!

For more information on the Guiding Stars program, or if you have any further questions please contact us:

RD@guidingstars.com

