

RESEARCH BRIEF

Group-Based Nutrition Interventions to Promote Health and Mobility in Community-Dwelling Older Adults: A Systematic Review

KEY POINTS

- ✓ Group-based nutrition education with tools for change may increase healthy eating and reduce nutrition risk.
- ✓ The impact of nutrition interventions on mobility outcomes was unclear.
- ✓ Overall, the body of evidence had unclear or high risk of bias, and high variability across interventions and outcomes.

What is this research about?

Many older adults do not meet dietary recommendations. Encouraging nutritious foods in quantities to meet nutritional requirements is important to prevent disability and disease. Although many community-based programs for older adults exist, whether they produce the intended results is not known. This review aims to identify the effects of group-based nutrition interventions to increase healthy eating, reduce nutrition risk, improve nutritional status, and improve physical mobility among community-dwelling older adults.

What did the researchers find?

Four main intervention categories were identified: 1) nutrition education with tools for change (e.g., goal setting), 2) passive nutrition education (e.g., lectures, handouts), 3) interactive nutrition education (e.g., workshops, discussion), and 4) food access

(e.g., mobile markets, community gardens, food samples). There was generally unclear or high risk of bias within studies, and high variability across interventions and outcomes. These features make it difficult to identify best practices for these types of interventions.

Group-based nutrition education with tools for change were most promising in improving food and fluid intake, nutritional status, and healthy eating knowledge compared to baseline or control.

The impact on mobility outcomes was unclear.

Where do we go from here?

These results will inform the co-design of the EMBOLDEN program.

Although group-based nutrition education with tools for change may promote healthy eating among community-dwelling older adults, the available evidence is relatively low quality.

High-quality research in group-based nutrition education for older adults is needed.

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<https://achru.mcmaster.ca/research-studies/embolden-trial-partnering-older-adults-and-communities-develop-and-test-community>

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