

# SNAPshot

## NCP Step 2: Nutrition Diagnosis

**What is the purpose of a nutrition diagnosis?** The purpose is to identify and describe a specific nutrition problem that can be resolved or improved through treatment/nutrition intervention by a food and nutrition professional. A nutrition diagnosis (e.g., inconsistent carbohydrate intake) is different from a medical diagnosis (e.g., diabetes).

**How does a food and nutrition professional determine a nutrition diagnosis?** Food and nutrition professionals use the data collected in the nutrition assessment to identify and label the patient/client's\* nutrition diagnosis using standard nutrition diagnostic terminology. Each nutrition diagnosis has a reference sheet that includes its definition, possible etiology/causes, and common signs or symptoms identified in the nutrition assessment step.

**How are the Nutrition Diagnoses organized?** In three categories:

Intake	Clinical	Behavioral-Environmental
<i>Too much or too little of a food or nutrient compared to actual or estimated needs</i>	<i>Nutrition problems that relate to medical or physical conditions</i>	<i>Knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, physical environment, access to food, or food safety</i>

**How is the Nutrition Diagnosis documented?** Food and nutrition professionals write a PES statement to describe the problem, its root cause, and the assessment data that provide evidence for the nutrition diagnosis. The format for the PES statement is "Nutrition problem label related to \_\_\_\_ as evidenced by \_\_\_\_."

(P) Problem or Nutrition Diagnosis Label	(E) Etiology	(S) Signs/Symptoms
Describes alterations in the patient/client's nutritional status.	Cause/Contributing Risk Factors Linked to the nutrition diagnosis label by the words "related to."	Data used to determine that the patient/client has the nutrition diagnosis specified. Linked to the etiology by the words "as evidenced by."

No nutrition diagnosis at this time (NO-1.1) may be documented if the assessment indicates that no nutrition problem currently exists that warrants a nutrition intervention.

**What are the guidelines for selecting the nutrition diagnosis and writing a clear PES statement?** The most important and urgent problem to be addressed is selected. When specifying the nutrition diagnosis and writing the PES statement, food and nutrition professionals ask themselves a series of questions that help clarify the nutrition diagnosis. (See the critical thinking box.)

### Critical thinking during this step...

Evaluate your PES statement by using the following:

- P** – Can the nutrition professional resolve or improve the nutrition diagnosis for this individual, group, or population? When all things are equal and there is a choice between stating the PES statement using two nutrition diagnoses from different domains, consider the Intake nutrition diagnosis as the one more specific to the role of the RD.
- E** – Evaluate what you have used as your etiology to determine if it is the "root cause" or the most specific root cause that the RD can address with a nutrition intervention. If as an RD you cannot resolve the problem by addressing the etiology, can the RD intervention at least lessen the signs and symptoms?
- S** – Will measuring the signs and symptoms indicate if the problem is resolved or improved? Are the signs and symptoms specific enough that you can monitor (measure/evaluate changes) and document resolution or improvement of the nutrition diagnosis?
- PES Overall** – Does the nutrition assessment data support a particular nutrition diagnosis with a typical etiology and signs and symptoms?

**Are food and nutrition professionals limited to the nutrition diagnosis terms?** Nutrition diagnosis terms and definitions were developed with extensive input and should fit most situations; however, food and nutrition professionals can submit proposals for additions or revisions using the Procedure for Nutrition Controlled Vocabulary/Terminology Maintenance/Review available from the Academy.

*Detailed information about this step can be found in the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics's International Dietetics and Nutrition Terminology (IDNT) Reference Manual: Standardized Language for the Nutrition Care Process, Fourth Edition.*

*\*Patient/client refers to individuals, groups, populations, family members, and/or caregivers.*