

# Snapshot

## NCP Step 2: Nutrition Diagnosis

### Purpose:

The purpose of a nutrition diagnosis 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).

### Determining a nutrition diagnosis:

Food and nutrition professionals use nutrition assessment data to identify and label the patient/client's\* nutrition diagnosis using standard nutrition diagnostic terminology. The eNCPT provides a reference sheet for each nutrition diagnosis that includes its definition, possible etiology/causes, and common signs or symptoms identified in the nutrition assessment step.

### Terminology for nutrition diagnosis is organized in 3 domains (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>

### Documenting a nutrition diagnosis:

Food and nutrition professionals write a PES (Problem, Etiology, Signs and Symptoms) 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 diagnosis term (problem)] related to [Etiology] as evidenced by [Signs/Symptoms].”

(P) Problem or Nutrition Diagnosis Term	(E) Etiology	(S) Signs/Symptoms
Describes alterations in the patient/client's nutritional status.	Cause/Contributing Risk Factors Linked to the nutrition diagnosis term by the words “related to.”	Data or indicators used to determine the patient/client's nutrition diagnosis. 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 exists to justify a nutrition intervention or if further nutrition assessment data are needed to identify a nutrition diagnosis.

### Guidelines for selecting the nutrition diagnosis and writing a clear PES statement:

Select the most important and urgent problem to be addressed. When writing the PES statement, food and nutrition professionals can ask a series of questions (identified in the critical thinking skills section below) that help clarify the nutrition diagnosis.

#### Critical thinking skills:

- P** – Can the nutrition professional resolve or improve the nutrition diagnosis of the patient/client? 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 RDN.
  - E** – Evaluate whether the etiology is the specific “root cause” that can be addressed with a nutrition intervention. If addressing the etiology cannot resolve the problem, can the RDN 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 the RDN can monitor (measure/evaluate changes) and document resolution or improvement of the nutrition diagnosis?
- PES Overall** – Does the nutrition assessment data support the nutrition diagnosis, etiology, and signs and symptoms?

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