



Dietitian FAQ

Frequently Asked Questions about Nutrition Services at PANW

Q. Why was I referred to the dietitian?

A. The primary care providers (PCPs) refer infants, children and teens to the registered dietitian for a variety of reasons. A dietitian can assist families in areas such as growth or weight issues, picky eating, sports nutrition, food allergies, high cholesterol, iron deficiency, and many other medical conditions where medical nutrition therapy is beneficial.

Q. How can I prepare for my dietitian appointment?

A. Prior to your dietitian visit, please record your child's intake for 3 days on our written form and bring to your appointment. If possible, please keep records for 2 week days and 1 weekend day. You can download a food diary form on the clinic forms page of our website. The direct link for the form is <http://www.portlandpediatric.com/documents/FOOD-DIARY-prior-to-visit.pdf>. If you keep an electronic record of your child's intake (e.g. on your phone), please **print it out** and bring to your appointment.

Q. What can I expect at the appointment?

A. During the session, the dietitian will take a diet history, assess current eating and exercise habits, and devise an individualized strategy for healthful eating with each patient and family.

Q. What types of conditions are seen by the dietitian at Pediatric Associates?

A. The dietitian frequently sees patients for picky eating, sports nutrition, vegetarian/vegan diets, weight management, underweight or failure to thrive, pre-diabetes, type 2 diabetes, diagnosed food allergies, celiac/gluten intolerance, irritable bowel syndrome, metabolic syndrome and lipid abnormalities.

Q. Will my insurance cover nutrition services? Are there other ways to pay for nutrition visits?

A. Many insurance plans now include nutrition benefits. In most cases, our benefit and eligibility specialists will check to see if your plan includes nutrition benefits prior to scheduling your appointment. If you do not have benefits, you can sometimes use flexible spending accounts to pay for dietitian services. Some plans require a certificate of medical need from your child's PCP in order to use FSA or HSA funds for dietitian services. Our staff can assist you in providing this form if needed.

Q. My child is on the Oregon Health Plan. Will nutrition visits be covered?

A. Nutrition is a covered benefit for children who are covered by Family Care Health. Other OHP plans generally do not cover nutrition services.

Q. What is the “Fresh Start” program?



A. The Fresh Start program is provided at no charge and includes monthly classes on infant and toddler feeding as well as free prenatal nutrition consultations. For more information, visit <http://www.portlandpediatric.com/fresh-start-program>.

Q. Can I bring my child with me to the Fresh Start classes?

A. Infants (up to 12 months of age) are welcome at the *Starting out Right with Baby* Infant Feeding Class.

The *Growing Up: Feeding Development and Behavior* Toddler Feeding Class is not an appropriate setting for small children. Parents will get more out of the class when they are free from the distraction of caring for busy toddlers.

Q. Does my child need to attend the individual nutrition appointment?

A. Infants, children and teens of all ages are always welcome to attend individual nutrition appointments and in many cases, it is an important part of medical nutrition therapy to include the child in discussion and education.

There are times when parents prefer to attend the first session without their child. In general, if your child has had their height and weight measured at PANW recently, you can attend the first session without your child. For a child under age three, this would be within the past month. For older children, this is generally within the past three months.

Q. Can you tell me about the education and training of a registered dietitian?

A. A registered dietitian has a minimum of a bachelor’s degree in an accredited dietetics program, a year of supervised clinical practice and has passed a national registration exam. Most dietitians also have a master’s degree. To maintain the credential, dietitians have to regularly complete continuing professional education coursework.

Q. What is the difference between a nutritionist and a dietitian?

A. The term nutritionist has no legal definition or requirements. All registered dietitians are also considered nutritionists but not all nutritionists are registered dietitians.

Q. Does the PANW dietitian have any specialized training or skills?

A. Connie Evers, MS, RDN, CSSD, LD has a master’s degree in nutrition with an emphasis in sports nutrition and she is board certified as a sports science dietitian. She has worked in the area of pediatric and community-based child nutrition for 35 years. She is also licensed by the Oregon Health Licensing Agency, board of licensed dietitians.

Q. Where can I find out more about nutrition services at Pediatric Associates of the Northwest?

A. A full description of Connie and her services is included on the Nutrition Services flyer, which can be downloaded from <http://www.portlandpediatric.com/nutrition>.