

Child Health Specialty Clinics (CHSC) provides nutrition screening, evaluation, and ongoing services and contacts. Early ACCESS nutrition services are included under IDEA Part C and provided at no cost to the family.

120.14(8) “*Nutrition services*” include: *a.* Conducting individual assessments of: (1) Nutritional history and dietary intake; (2) Anthropometric, biochemical, and clinical variables; (3) Feeding skills and feeding problems; and (4) Food habits and food preferences; *b.* Developing and monitoring appropriate plans to address the nutritional needs of an eligible child; and *c.* Making referrals to appropriate community resources to carry out nutrition goals. [34 CFR 303.12(d)(7)]

Why would a child need nutrition services?

A child’s ability to learn, grow, and develop depends on his/her nutritional status. A pediatric registered dietitian (RD) is a licensed professional who receives specialized training and is familiar with nutritional needs specific to infants and toddlers. This knowledge can be applied in the IFSP to ensure nutrition is appropriate to support developmental outcomes.

RD services differ from those offered by an occupational therapist (OT) as the OT’s training and expertise is focused on the mechanical aspects of eating and not the nutritional value and composition of the liquids and foods an infant and toddler receives. Dietitians are also able to evaluate a child’s growth, provide recommendations regarding special nutrition supplements and tube-feeding products whereas this falls outside the OT’s scope of practice.

How are nutrition needs identified?

The Early ACCESS Nutrition Checklist is used with parents/caregivers to identify nutrition concerns. If there are two or more bold answers, then a referral should be made to CHSC for further evaluation and assessment if the family is interested in nutrition services.

- The Early ACCESS Nutrition Checklist should be completed with all initial evaluations.
- The checklist should be updated at the annual review for children not receiving Early ACCESS nutrition services.

If a child is followed by a dietitian outside of WIC two or more times a year, contact the CHSC nutrition coordinator to determine if a referral is appropriate. If a nutritional referral is not needed, document external dietitian services under medical or other service on the IFSP.

How are nutrition services provided?

Registered dietitians employed by CHSC provide nutrition services as part of an IFSP. CHSC nutrition services are based on individual child and family needs. Most visits are virtual.

If a child is transitioning to an IEP, the CHSC dietitian may provide documentation to the assigned school nurse for inclusion in the IEP. If needed, the CHSC dietitian will help the family determine where nutrition services can be obtained after the third birthday.

Steps to Schedule a CHSC Nutrition Evaluation:

A nutrition evaluation may be requested for children that have a nutrition concern identified through the Early ACCESS Nutrition Checklist, or when a family indicates growth or eating challenge and agrees to be referred to CHSC for nutrition services.

1. Notify the family that the child can be referred to CHSC for a nutrition evaluation with a pediatric registered dietitian.
2. Obtain required consents:
 - Early ACCESS Consent to Exchange and Release Information to CHSC/Iowa Health Care
 - Early ACCESS Consent to Exchange and Release Information with the child's primary health care provider
3. Ensure the completed Early ACCESS Nutrition Checklist is available in ACHIEVE.
4. Share the case with the CHSC nutrition coordinator, Stephany Brimeyer, in ACHIEVE.
5. E-mail Stephany Brimeyer at stephany-brimeyer@uiowa.edu.
 - Include the child's initials, date of the IFSP meeting if scheduled, and other information pertinent to the request for a nutrition evaluation.
6. Inform the family CHSC will contact them as soon as possible after receiving all the necessary forms/documents.

Information will be provided to the parent/guardian and service coordinator regarding the nutrition visit including assigned dietitian, date/time of the evaluation and mode of connection. The service coordinator will be contacted by CHSC within two weeks of receiving the referral to provide an update on scheduling the nutrition visit.