



## How Our Nutrition Program Serves Clients

God's Love established the Nutrition Services Department in 1992 to expand the breadth of services provided and to ensure that the meals we cooked were nutritionally optimal for clients with HIV/AIDS. Staffed by Registered Dietitian Nutritionists (RDNs), our Nutrition Services Department has always been dedicated to developing individually tailored meals for our clients, and to providing nutrition counseling and education for our community. In fact, it is the provision of nutrition services that became the God's Love signature difference among food providers.

In 2001, when God's Love broadened our mission to serve other seriously ill populations such as people with cancer and Alzheimer's disease, the nutrition team expanded its scope of expertise to meet the new challenge. Over the past seventeen years, this capacity has grown considerably, and today, God's Love serves people living with over 200 different illnesses. Every day, our RDNs address the unique dietary needs of our clients by tailoring meals specifically to each illness. After an initial intake, dietitians conduct comprehensive interviews to understand the client's symptoms, medications, allergies and other pertinent medical information.

RDNs then capture this data in the Client Activity Tracking System (CATS) and use it to customize meals for clients. Our RDNs provide ongoing individual nutrition counseling and support. These sessions help clients and family members cope with illness, and also provide the information they need to lead the healthiest lifestyle possible. Clients can also call our Nutrition Services Department any time if they have any questions or if they experience changes in their health. The Nutrition Services Department also provides community-based nutrition education and cooking workshops for people living with serious illness and their caregivers. Free of charge to participants, these classes are designed to increase knowledge of how nutrition affects disease progression and quality of life, and how it can assist in treatment adherence.

To support these efforts over the years, the Nutrition Services Department has created 23 education booklets in several languages. They have been disseminated throughout the country and worldwide; downloadable versions of the current booklets are available on our website. The nutrition section of our website also includes disease-specific nutrition fact sheets created for people affected by different illnesses.

In addition to the work with clients and the community, the Nutrition Services Department has established and periodically reviews agency nutrition standards and menu content, and monitors food safety standards set by the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene. Because of the special needs of our clients, it is essential that every person working in our kitchen, meal packaging and delivery departments understands and embraces the need for safe food handling and incorporates it as part of their daily routine in all food preparation. The Nutrition Services Department manages the training and monitoring of these activities.

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Our Registered Dietitian Nutritionists are committed to supporting the heart health of our clients and the community. Here are their favorite tips on how to protect your heart.



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