

Considering nutrition as a management option in Sickle Cell Disease (SCD) plays an important role in enabling people affected by sickle cell to better self –manage their condition. The aim of this leaflet is to raise awareness of some of the key nutritional factors affecting sickle cell patients across the life cycle and empower both the patients and healthcare professionals to enable patients to improve their health and wellbeing outcomes.

NUTRITION ACROSS THE LIFE CYCLE:



KEY NUTRITIONAL FACTORS TO BE AWARE OF ACROSS THE LIFE CYCLE:

PAEDIATRICS		ADOLESCENTS	
STAGES	WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR	STAGES	WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Weaning (6 months) Toddlers (2years) School age (4 years) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Common nutritional problems; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Growth failure, Failure to thrive, Fussy eating Reduced appetite/intake Pica Support for parents and caregivers Regular assessment and monitoring of nutritional health Referral to dietitian for specialist nutritional support Access to tailored nutrition education and resources 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Transitioning age (from 11years) Young Adults 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Common nutritional problems; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Delayed puberty Delayed menarche Assess and monitor malnutrition risk (Baseline MUST Score) Monitor infection risk – compliance with medication) Monitor appetite, quality of diet and food choices Provide access to tailored nutrition education, resources and support
WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR			
ADULTS	PREGNANCY	OLDER ADULTS	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Assess and monitor malnutrition risk (Baseline MUST score) Consider impact of chronic anaemia and fatigue on activities of daily living Monitor worsening complications and its impact on nutrition Assess frailty risk secondary to complications Monitor frequency of crisis and resulting hospital admissions Assess and manage the side effects of the treatment modalities on nutrition (constipation, nausea) Provide access to tailored nutrition education, resources and support 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Assess and monitor malnutrition risk – (ante and postnatal checks) Assess nutritional risks Monitor regular meals, snacks and supplements (Folic acid, Vitamin D) and (iodine, omega 3- fatty acids, Vitamin B12) in plant based diets Avoidance of alcohol and smoking Ensure good food hygiene Preventing dehydration Monitor appetite and nutritional intake Monitor pregnancy side effects (constipation, heartburn, nausea) 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Assess overall malnutrition risk and baseline MUST score; <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Check appetite and intake Monitor access to food Check support with shopping and meal preparation Assess frailty risk and impact on nutritional status Assess any additional age related needs, risks impacting nutrition Monitor worsening complications and hospital admissions Monitor any changes in appetite Improve access to tailored nutrition advice and support 	