



Complementary & Natural
Healthcare Council

Nutritional therapy

The basis of nutritional therapy

Nutritional therapy is the application of nutrition science in the promotion of health, peak performance and individual care. Nutritional therapy practitioners use a wide range of tools to assess and identify potential nutritional imbalances and understand how these may contribute to an individual's symptoms and health concerns. This approach allows them to work with individuals to address nutritional balance and help support the body towards maintaining health. Nutritional therapy is recognised as a complementary medicine. It is relevant both for individuals looking to enhance their health and wellbeing and for those with chronic conditions wishing to work with or 'consult' a nutritional therapist in collaboration with other suitably qualified healthcare professionals.

Practitioners consider each individual to be unique and recommend personalized nutrition and lifestyle programmes rather than a 'one size fits all' approach. Practitioners never recommend nutritional therapy as a replacement for medical advice and always refer any client with 'red flag' signs or symptoms to their medical professional. They will also frequently work alongside a medical professional and will communicate with other healthcare professionals involved in the client's care to explain any nutritional therapy programme that has been provided.

What a nutritional therapy session typically involves?

Before the first consultation, the practitioner usually provides a health and nutrition questionnaire for the client to complete. An initial consultation typically lasts 60 to 90 minutes, and in this time the practitioner asks detailed questions about current health concerns, symptoms, diagnosis and treatment, medical history, family history, lifestyle, levels of physical activity, use of medication and supplements and diet. The practitioner then evaluates individual needs and uses the extensive evidence base for nutritional science to develop a personalised, safe and effective nutrition and lifestyle programme.

Follow up consultations are generally after four weeks in order to monitor progress and make any necessary adjustments. Further follow-ups may be required depending on each individual situation.

Choosing a practitioner

It is important to choose a qualified nutritional therapist who has undertaken all the necessary training to understand the theory and practice of nutritional therapy.

You can check whether a nutritional therapist is registered with the Complementary & Natural Healthcare Council (CNHC) by searching the register at www.cnhc.org.uk. By choosing nutritional therapists registered with the CNHC you can be confident that they are properly trained, qualified and insured.