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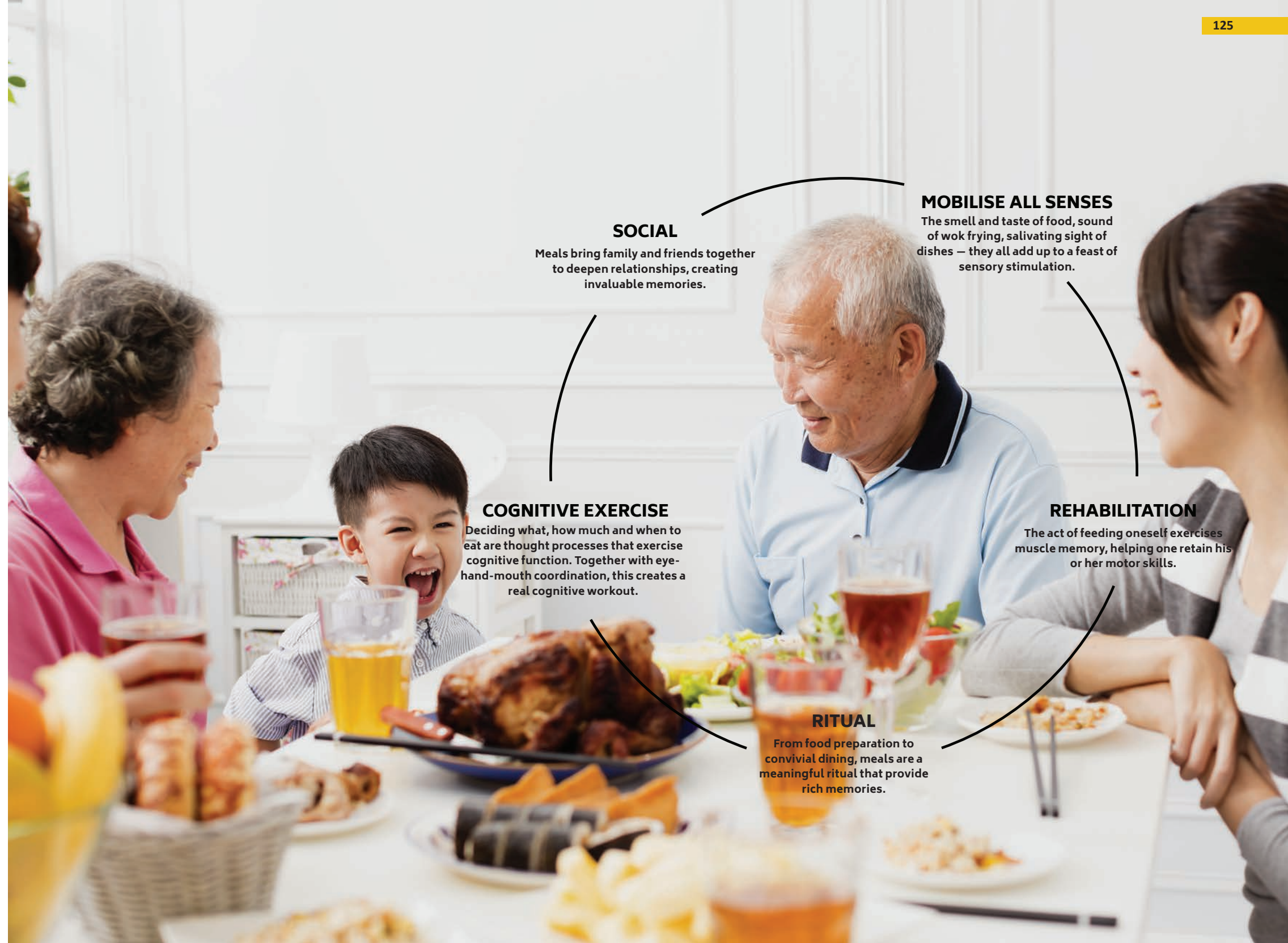
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MEALTIME

Mealtime is often a highlight of the day. The flavours, tastes and conversations all evoke a rich experience that builds emotional bonds. Meals are also an opportune moment to exercise choice, cognition and coordination. Approaching mealtime as a positive activity creates joy and meaning.

More than just eating

Mealtimes involve more than just the perfunctory act of eating. They bring family and friends together in a shared ritual. Additionally, mealtimes are an opportunity for physical and cognitive exercise — deciding what and when to eat, working our hand-eye-mouth coordination, stimulating our sense of taste and smell. The complexity behind each of these activities can resist the onset of dementia.



SOCIAL

Meals bring family and friends together to deepen relationships, creating invaluable memories.

MOBILISE ALL SENSES

The smell and taste of food, sound of wok frying, salivating sight of dishes — they all add up to a feast of sensory stimulation.

COGNITIVE EXERCISE

Deciding what, how much and when to eat are thought processes that exercise cognitive function. Together with eye-hand-mouth coordination, this creates a real cognitive workout.

REHABILITATION

The act of feeding oneself exercises muscle memory, helping one retain his or her motor skills.

RITUAL

From food preparation to convivial dining, meals are a meaningful ritual that provide rich memories.



Food brings people together



Festive holidays like Chinese New Year, Hari Raya, and Deepavali are all reasons to feast. Regardless of culture, food brings people together in powerful ways that create bonds, community and memories. Sharing meals affirms one's sense of belonging and connectedness to the community.



Traditional rituals like "lo hei" help to trigger positive associations and memories of similar experiences in the past. Small design adaptations, like hard primary-colour backgrounds, make the table setting legible and allow care recipients to participate fully in these meal rituals.



Engage through the act of cooking

Involve care recipients in cooking and preparation. When they work with their hands and fingers, they tap into procedural memory — exercising their brain and stimulating their senses. The act of cooking also provides a sense of purpose, allowing them to feel cherished and involved.

Tools like the mortar and pestle offer a sense of familiarity, triggering procedural memories of traditional ways of cooking.



Maintain cognitive function by tapping into procedural memory.

Trigger the sense of touch, smell and taste through food, textures and flavours.

Cultivate the sense of purpose in preparing food for loved ones.

Exercise hand-eye coordination, preserve dexterity.

ACTIVITY ZONE



Lowering the kitchen work surface allows food preparation to take place ergonomically from a sitting position.

02

03

RÅSKOG
trolley

\$59

The RÅSKOG is not just for storing. Care recipients can also use this versatile cart to wheel food to the table.

COOKING ZONE

Conceal dangerous tools in cupboards and drawers where they cannot be seen. Switches to stove tops can also be concealed.

A kitchen for you, a kitchen for me

Separate the kitchen into two zones — an Activity Zone (safe, no fires) and a Cooking Zone (functional, with open stove cooking). The Activity Zone enables care recipients to be safely involved in food preparation, while the separate Cooking Zone allows caregivers to cook nearby.



Lucy loved cooking, and she always did it with pride and care. Providing her family with tasty and nourishing dishes gave her a sense of purpose. As matriarch of the kitchen, she had command over every dish. Today, she still remembers so much of it — how to de-vein the shrimp, how finely to chop the garlic, how rice wine brings out the aroma. Cooking gave Lucy autonomy, power, and purpose.

01 BERGTUNGA chopping boards Cutting surfaces in bright contrasting colours help one see the food better.

02 BLANDA MATT bamboo bowl Choose large, durable bowls for food preparation to prevent spills and breakages.

03 RÅSKOG trolley hack The trolley doubles up as a storage unit and a serving cart to bring food from the kitchen to the table.

If I can cook, so can you!

In the preparation of meals, assign care recipients tasks that suit their ability to instill confidence. Use colour and other design interventions to make the kitchen visually legible, encouraging safe and independent use.



01 Use timers as reminders.

It's easy to lose track of time. A simple timer with an alarm is an auditory reminder for things to be done.

ORDNING timer From IKEA.



↑ **Preparing rojak does not involve heat — it is a safe (and flavourful) way to work one's hands while tapping into procedural memories.**



02 Large dishes resist spills.

With large unbreakable bowls, breakages and accidental spills are now a thing of the past.

BLANDA MATT bamboo bowl From IKEA.

03 It's safer when it's not hot.

It's always safer when the food preparation involves ingredients and objects that are not hot. Washing vegetables, making sandwiches or even tossing a salad are fun ways to prepare food away from the danger of a stove.



04 Colour contrast for safe cutting.

Cutting surfaces with bright primary colours help one see the food better. Consider plastic knives for a safe cutting experience.

BERGTUNGA chopping boards From IKEA.

KALAS cutlery set From IKEA.

05 Sort ingredients legibly.

Prevent confusion with clear, transparent containers and easy-to-read labels.



CONVENIENT PREPARATION, EASY COOKING



For both the carer and the care recipient

Meal kit delivery services like Hello Fresh deliver pre-packed ingredients with easy-to-follow recipes. This makes it simple for caregivers to prepare sumptuous meals. Even care recipients can join in the fun — easy peasy, lemon squeeze!

FROM FARM TO TABLE



SOCKER
plant pot

\$2.90

How about growing your own food?

Being involved in food preparation is not limited to the kitchen. Growing herbs and vegetables, and being part of the therapeutic process of cultivating plants could give the meal an added personal touch.

01 SOCKER plant pot From IKEA.

02 BASIL herb From the fruits of their labour.



How about renting a plot outside to grow one's own edible garden? Going out each day for a few hours offers a healthy dose of daylight too. Some sweat involved.



ALLOTMENT GARDENING SCHEME

Garden plot lease to grow your own greens

By National Parks



Get handsy with veggies

Growing herbs and vegetables is inherently therapeutic. Nothing beats working with one's fingers and watching a plant grow. If the kitchen feels too challenging, growing food may be a meaningful way to involve care recipients in creating their meals.



If going out is not an option, growing micro-greens and herbs at home is a great way to keep their hands busy and contribute to the dining table.

To eat or not to eat

That is the question. Care recipients sometimes lose interest in food and need to have their appetites coaxed at mealtime. Others may have such insatiable appetites that they start to over-eat. We offer tips to encourage or manage the appetite.



1 Walks

Outdoor walks and physical exertion help work up an appetite.

2 Smell

Entice them with the delicious smell and flavour of their favourite food.

3 Table Setting

Setting the table can be a ritual — and a psychological prompt — to signal mealtime.

4 Re-focus

If they are over-eating, let them focus on other things. How about playing with the grandchildren or turning on the radio?

THE SMELL OF FRESHLY BAKED COOKIES



LOCKBETE
baking tray
\$9.90

Conjure an appetite

Stimulate appetite with the aroma of food, sounds of cooking, and other vivid sensations related to food.

01 LOCKBETE baking tray From IKEA.



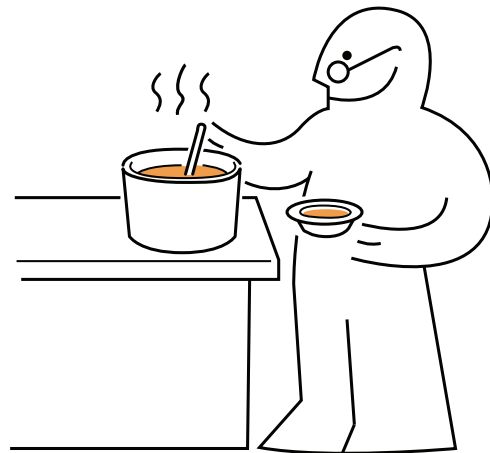
RESTAURANT OF MISTAKEN ORDERS

An eatery where all the servers are persons with dementia

▶ Visit www.mistakenorders.com to learn more.

I choose what I eat, and help out as much as I can

Let care recipients choose what to eat and help themselves with their servings. Deciding what, how much and when to eat — these are all thought processes that exercise cognitive function.



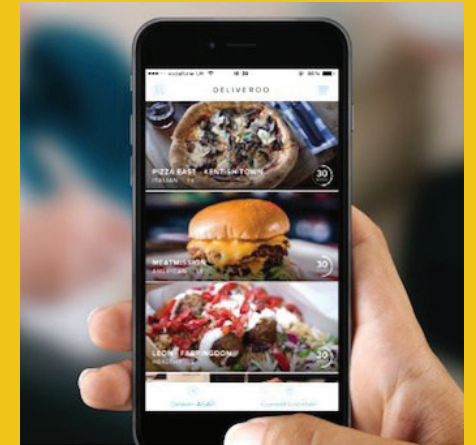
Even purée can come with variety and choice. Savoury purée? Fruity purée? Offer a range to choose from. Bento trays with different sections could be good way to serve a smorgasbord of purées.

HEROISK compartment plate From IKEA.



Let them choose from healthy options. Entice them with naturally colourful and sweet vegetables like carrots and sweet corn.

CANNOT COOK, CAN STILL CHOOSE



Delivery service apps are your friend

These apps offer a myriad of choices for home delivery. Let care recipients choose their favourite meals from the tantalising images of the tasty food. Swiping on a smartphone app is also a chance to learn new skills.



01

Avoid cluttering the dining table with unnecessary objects. Only the essentials will suffice. This reduces visual distractions during mealtime.



03

04

02

SCHOTTIS
pleated blinds

\$4.⁹⁰

Surfaces like cork or floor rugs help to absorb background noise, improving overall acoustics.

The dining experience

Excessive environmental stimulation can often be an unnecessary distraction from one's meal. A brightly-lit dining room with acoustic surfaces, and curtains or blinds to conceal visual clutter could go a long way to enhance the dining experience.

01 NYMÅNE pendant lamp Sufficient lighting to ensure you can see what you are eating.

02 SCHOTTIS pleated blinds Conceal distracting elements like the kitchen area by drawing blinds or curtains during meal times.

03 YPPERLIG table A large table where the legs do not obstruct a wheelchair.

04 JANINGE chair A stackable chair system for easy stow away if a wheelchair is needed.

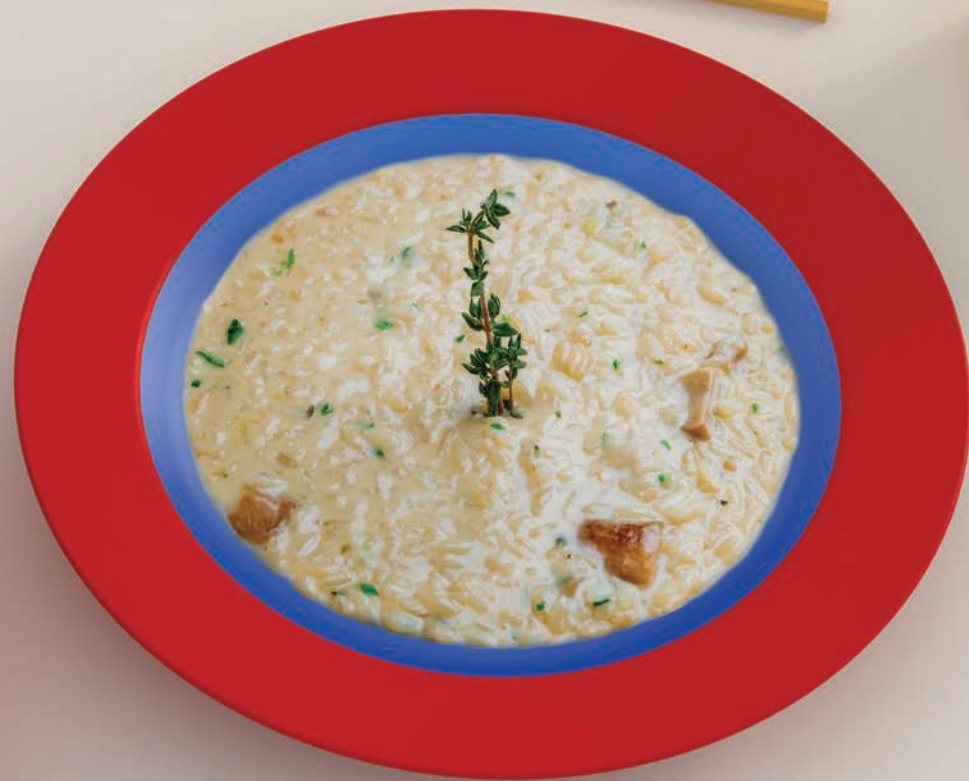
Tableware

Keep table settings simple and free of clutter. Help care recipients focus on eating by avoiding visual distractions. Colour contrast also plays a part. Plates with bright primary colours make it easier for care recipients to see their food.

Research¹ shows that eating from blue-coloured plates increases food intake because blue contrasts well with food.



Portion food into separate plates and serve them one after another. This prevents care recipients from feeling overwhelmed.



Consider using tableware made from non-breakable materials like plastic. This avoids accidents and makes for a safer meal experience. Dishes with a larger circumference help to prevent spills.



Dishes with higher and steeper sides help to push food onto the spoon and also prevent spills.



Research¹ shows that red-coloured cups encourage water consumption. Choose cups that have ears which allow for easy hold.

¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed/15297089>

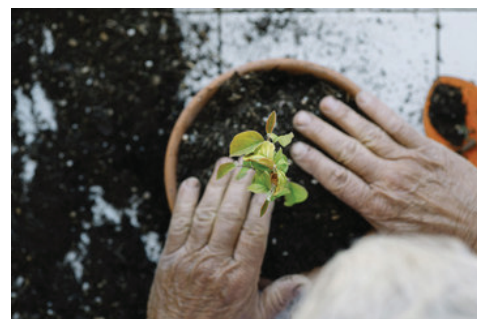
TALRIKA red mug From IKEA.

FINGER LICKIN' GOOD



Finger food promotes hand exercise

When using cutlery becomes a cumbersome affair, why not let them eat with their fingers. This lets them exercise their hand-mouth coordination — and it usually tastes better.



Handy Work

Hands and fingers define much of our interaction with food — from making to eating. Muscle and procedural memory reside within our hands through simple actions like washing fruits or plucking beansprouts. Using one's hands is a meaningful way to keep one's mind active.

KIAÄAP



MEDHJÄLPARE
chopsticks
\$1.90 /10 pieces

Fingering the chopsticks

Using cutlery and chopsticks requires finger dexterity, making it the perfect workout for motor coordination.

01 MEDHJÄLPARE chopsticks From IKEA.

Tasty and delicious. Who doesn't love a hawker meal? Hawker centres are familiar and comforting places — the vivid sights and sounds evoke nostalgic associations. And let's not forget the many flavourful local dishes to pick from. Organise periodic hawker visits for care recipients to tuck into their favourite dishes.

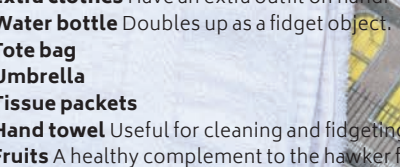
Give them the option to choose between the food stalls or dishes, and let them serve themselves as much as they can.



A DAY OUT TO THE HAWKER

Be prepared for the day out.

Certain items will always be needed, especially when one is outside home. Pack a bag that carries these essential items so that you'll always be ready for the impromptu outdoor excursion. Tissues, a bottle of water, a change of clothes even — it's good to be prepared.

- 
- 01 Extra clothes** Have an extra outfit on hand.
- 02 Water bottle** Doubles up as a fidget object.
- 03 Tote bag**
- 04 Umbrella**
- 05 Tissue packets**
- 06 Hand towel** Useful for cleaning and fidgeting with.
- 07 Fruits** A healthy complement to the hawker fare.
- 08 Hand sanitiser**