



## Nutrition

### Rice and Seek

Nutrition and healthy eating contribute to maintaining bodily structure and processes. It provides us with energy, cognitive abilities and can protect us from disease and illness (1). As we age, we begin to change in a way we buy, prepare and eat food to maintain a healthy diet. Limitations in one's ability to eat or prepare food can lead to poor health. This simulation will help you understand the difficulties of adhering to food restrictions due to intolerances or allergies that accompany aging. For example, a person with vision problems might have difficulty distinguishing between vegetables in a salad that they cannot eat and must remove because of food allergies. Using a mix of flour and rice, that makes it difficult to distinguish between the two substances, you will experience how an older adult may have trouble assuring proper nutrition. To enhance the difficulty, you may complete this simulation in a dimly lit room.

### Materials

- 1 plate
- 1 spoon
- 1/3 cup of flour
- 1 tsp of rice

### Procedure

1. Complete the precursor simulations if you have not already done so.
2. Set up a spot at a table with 1 plate and 1 spoon.
3. On the plate, create a mixture of 1/3 cup flour and a 1 tsp of rice.
4. Use your non-dominant hand for the remainder of this simulation.
5. Use the spoon to separate the rice from the flour on the plate. Keeping in mind how this situation may impact an older individual, and why older adults might be less inclined to eat in presence of others out of embarrassment or frustration.
6. Once you feel that you have either picked out the majority of pieces or have become too frustrated to continue, stop the simulation and allow a moment to see how well you did.

### Reflection Questions

1. Before this simulation, what was your perception on how age-related changes can impact nutrition for older adults? How did your mindset change after the simulation?
2. How would eating difficulties affect your ability to eat in public or a social setting?
3. How could you support an older adult who has difficulty preparing food or eating?