

NEW YORK UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

While I was pursuing with my Didactic Program in Dietetics in New York, I had an opportunity to volunteer at NYU Medical Center. This has a proud history dating back to 1841. It is a world-class patient-centered integrated academic medical center and is America's premier center for excellence in health care, biomedical research and medical education.

Here, I learnt to rank patients at different levels by reading patient's health problem and medical history advised by the doctor. Ranking of patients were performed at three different levels. At level 1-Low Risk, follow up care of 10-14 days were screened. Feeding Modality was checked with regular or single therapeutic diet. At this level patients suffering from asthma, cellulitis, hepatitis A,B,C, a child suffering from jaundice and minor surgeries or fractures were of concern. Level 2 i.e. Moderate Risk includes patients suffering from Anemia, cancer (multiple myeloma, leukemia, lymphoma), chronic renal failure and COPD. BMI of patients were checked. Under this two or more therapeutic diet were given and maintenance of Enteral/ Parental support was required. Level 3 - High Risk, where I screened patients suffering from dehydration, DKA (diabetic ketose acidosis) and those who went through organ transplant and those with HIV positive. This provided me with the academic perspective and helped in building strong learning skills.

At the same time, I also counseled obese patients who were at a risk of developing diabetes and cancer especially colorectal cancer, which is considered to be the third largest cancer in America today. I advised them with the intake of fiber. Fiber decreases colon cancer by binding with bile salt. It also encourages the growth of beneficial bacteria, which binds carcinogens and prevents the activation of other carcinogens that may occur in colon. Such patients also require higher intake of calcium, vitamin D, B6, folate and vitamin C in the diet or as an extra supplement.

I am honored to be part of a prestigious organization, where I was able to screen different patients and became confident to take responsibility in future.

