

**Healthy Aging**

a dietetic practice group of the  
**Academy of Nutrition  
and Dietetics**



# CSG TOOL KIT

SPECIALIST IN GERONTOLOGICAL NUTRITION



# WELCOME!

You're on Your Way



Thank you for turning to the Healthy Aging DPG to help you on your journey to learn more about becoming a Board Certified Specialist in Gerontological Nutrition (CSG).

The tool kit is designed to help you walk you through the steps of becoming certified in the ever-growing field of geriatrics and healthy aging. It is not intended to be a substitution or replacement for reviewing and knowing the CDR guidelines related to exam preparation and the exam process.

In addition to this tool kit, we encourage you to consider use of Healthy Aging DPG's [study flashcards and the skills review study videos](#). Healthy Aging DPG members receive a significant purchase discount!

## Tool Kit Outline

1. Learn more about the CSG
2. Develop a plan
3. The application process
4. Studying for the exam
5. What is next?



# STEP 1:

## Learn More About the CSG



### What is a Board-Certified Specialist in Gerontological Nutrition (CSG)?

The Commission on Dietetic Registration (CDR) offers specialist Board certifications in several areas, including gerontological nutrition. According to the Commission for Dietetic Registration website, Board certification in gerontology is granted in recognition of an applicant's documented practice experience and successful completion of an examination in the specialty area.

By CDR's definition, gerontological nutrition dietitians directly provide nutrition care to promote quality of life and optimal health for older adults across the continuum of care, including acute care, post-acute care, primary care, long-term care, assisted living, home care, palliative care, community-based nutrition, food service, correctional facilities, and government programs. This also includes RDNs indirectly working with gerontological nutrition through roles in management, industry, education, and research.

### Why is it important to consider becoming a CSG?

The number of older Americans is growing a fast rate. Statistics from the Administration for Community Living indicate that in 2020, there were 56.1 million people 65 years of age or older. By 2040, there will be about 80.8 million older persons. In 2018, 16.49% of the population was estimated to be 65 years of age or older.

- 2018 data indicates that 14.35% of older Americans live below the poverty level.
- Data from 2013-2016 indicate that 32% of women and 39% of men (ages 65-74) are overweight.

Many aging citizens, their caregivers, and/or their families will require or benefit from the services and expertise of RDs/RDNs, whether it be in the form of counseling for those living independently, or management and medical nutrition therapy for those living in facilities. Additionally, there is always the possibility of changes in government programs that affect can older adults such as the Affordable Care Act, Medicare , the Older Americans Act (OAA, Title IIIc) , The SNAP Program for Elderly, and the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP).

Gerontology as a practice area is growing in scope and importance. Thus, it is important for RDNs who practice in programs that serve this demographic to keep current and informed of the effects that any changes in legislation or new research would have on our practice. An excellent way to accomplish this is to become a CSG.

## STEP 2:

### Develop a Plan



Now that you have read about all about the CSG, maybe you are starting to seriously consider taking the exam. Your next step is to look at the calendar and determine want to take the exam. (The exam is now offered year-round!)

Once you have determined the dates that you will submit your application and take the exam, it is time to develop your plan to successfully study and pass the exam.

#### Consider:

**Are you a self-learner?** If so the **“Study Guide”** and **“GROW Worksheet”** tools in the **CSG Study Resource Center** will be helpful. Set your own goals and work at your own pace.

**Do you like to have a little more support?** If so check out the link to mentoring in the **CSG Study Resource Center**. You will be brought to the Academy’s e-mentoring website where you can connect with a RDN mentor.

**When it comes to your strengths and weaknesses- can you narrow them down by looking at a list?** If so, the **“CSG Definition and Content Outline”** tool in the **CSG Study Resource Center** will be a great help to you. Consider purchasing the CSG flashcards and/or study videos – these are available as supplemental materials on the Healthy Aging DPG website.

See “CSG Game Plan” on the last page of this tool kit.

## STEP 3:

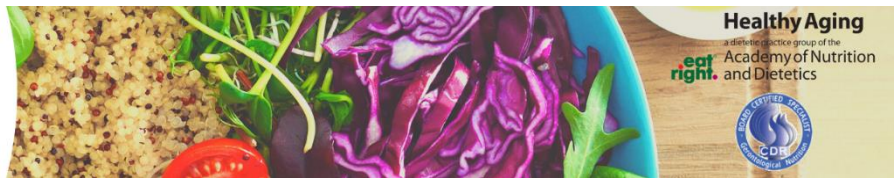
### The Application Process



CDR has taken steps to make this application process relatively easy- you can complete everything online! The purpose of the application is to show proof that you have maintained your RDN status for at least 2 years and that you have 2,000 hours of experience in geriatric nutrition within the past 5 years. Additionally, it is during the application process that you pay the fees. After your application is approved, you will receive additional instructions.

## STEP 4:

### Studying for the Exam



By now you have determined your important dates, figured out your strengths and weaknesses, decided if you will study independently or work with a mentor, and developed your game plan. Now the studying begins! Studying, like the game plan, is completely up to you and how you work.

Check out the **“CSG Study Guide”** and **“CSG Definition & Content Outline”** tools on the **CSG Study Resource Center** to help you outline your plan of study.

How do you know what to study? Be sure to check out the [Gerontological Nutrition Reference List](#) on the CDR website. These are the references used to create the CSG exam questions. Many of the references, like the Academy Position Papers, are available online free of cost. However, many of the references are textbooks and can be pricey. Do you need to purchase every reference? Not necessarily- remember how you study is based on your strengths and weaknesses. You may be able to find these resources through academic libraries via interlibrary loan.

## STEP 5:

### What's Next?



### **You passed!!! Congratulations!!!**

Now what? First off be sure to start using that credential! CDR has [Guidelines for Credential Placement](#) for be sure to check out the website to make sure your new credentials are listed correctly.

Second, update your resume to include this important credential. This certification can help you in securing your next job or advancement. Speaking of advancement, it may be time to approach your boss and contracts about getting a raise or increasing rates. You are now a board-certified specialist! In many places of employment this could warrant a raise, bonus, or award.

And finally, [Healthy Aging DPG](#) would love to hear from you about your journey, as well as any recommendations you have from improving our resources.

Congratulations!

# YOUR GAME PLAN

## A Tool for Success



**This tool is to help direct you in formulating a plan to pursue your CSG.**

### Why is obtaining the CSG important to me?

<input type="checkbox"/>	To help advance the profession of geriatric nutrition	<input type="checkbox"/>	To be prepared for impending needs of our aging population
<input type="checkbox"/>	To help in meeting the Healthy People 2020 goals	<input type="checkbox"/>	To protect the public in getting accurate geriatric nutrition services
<input type="checkbox"/>	To grow both personally and professionally	<input type="checkbox"/>	To provide the absolute best care to the patients you serve
<input type="checkbox"/>	To potentially increase your salary and benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	To have credentials after your name identifying you as a specialist
<input type="checkbox"/>	To strengthen your resume, advance in the field	<input type="checkbox"/>	To potentially be part of "Gerontological Specialty Exam Meeting"

### What tools in the CSG Help Desk will help me best?

<input type="checkbox"/>	CSG Top 10 Benefits	<input type="checkbox"/>	CSG FAQ
<input type="checkbox"/>	CSG Study Plan	<input type="checkbox"/>	CSG Definition and Content Outline
<input type="checkbox"/>	CSG Tool Kit	<input type="checkbox"/>	CSG Grow Worksheet
<input type="checkbox"/>	CSG Study Flashcards	<input type="checkbox"/>	CSG Study Videos

### How do you rate yourself in the following CSG Exam Nutrition Contents?

#### Exam area

Screening and Assessment  
Health History  
Cultural and Psychosocial Factors  
Food and Nutrition-Related Interventions  
Education and Counseling Interventions  
Care Plan and Coordination  
Food Safety  
Foodservice Operations

#### My Knowledge

Weak- 0      1      2      3      4      5 - Strong

### My Plan:

I will submit my application on the CDR website by (date)\_\_\_\_\_.

I will assess my strengths and weaknesses to determine what study materials to use and where to focus my energies.

I will begin studying on (date)\_\_\_\_\_

I will study \_\_\_\_\_ hours per week.

As the exam window gets closer, I will call to schedule my CSG exam date by (date)\_\_\_\_\_.