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PATIENT/ FAMILY EDUCATION

Nutrition for Wound Healing

Description

To heal from your wounds, you must eat a well-balanced meal. Your body will need support as it; grows new tissue, replaces fluids lost in wound drainage, manufactures enzymes to stimulate tissue growth, and produces proteins to fight infection, all the while maintaining itself as usual. Extra nutrition goes a long way when you are healing!

Good nutrition is one of the critical components of wound-healing protocol. Your doctor may order lab tests to determine your nutritional status. The following guidelines will help you consume the right mix of protein, fluids, and vitamins to feed your body and heal your wound.

Potential Risks

You may be at risk for nutrition-related problems if you have experienced or are experiencing any of the following:

- You have gained or lost 5% or more of your body weight in the past month or 10% in the last six months.
- You have a chronic disease such as Heart or Kidney Disease.
- You have stomach or intestinal tract disorder that interferes with the absorption of nutrients.
- You have tooth pain or mouth disorders that interfere with eating or chewing.
- You eat alone most of the time or have trouble getting groceries.
- You take more than three medicines, including over-the-counter drugs.
- You are diabetic and not able to control your blood sugar.
- You are suffering from depression

Necessary Nutrients

- **Protein:** The body needs about 15-20 calories and .6-.75 extra grams of protein per pound of your total body weight each day. For example, for a 150-pound person, this adds up to 2250 calories and 150 additional grams of protein a day for wound healing.
- **Fluids:** You need to drink extra fluids to help your kidneys process the extra protein and replace fluids lost from your wounds. If you have a heavily-draining wound, you will need to drink more to replace the fluids lost. It would be best if you had about half a fluid ounce per pound per day. For example, a 150-person will need an extra 75 ounces (for a frame of reference, a soda bottle is 20 fluid ounces).
- **Vitamin C:** You need 1,000-2,000 mg of Vitamin C a day during your healing process. Be careful not to take too much because Vitamin C is stored in the fat cells; high levels of Vitamin C can become toxic over time.
- **Vitamin A:** Vitamin A is another fat-soluble vitamin, so it needs to be taken with caution. It can decrease the healing effects of steroids on wound healing. A dose of 20,000: 25,000 IU/day is recommended for 10 days.
- **Vitamin B-Complex:** This vitamin helps in various ways, from better using the nutrients you eat to preventing anemia (Vitamin B increases oxygen supply to your wound).
- **Trace minerals:** You need traces of zinc, iron, and copper to heal difficult wounds.
- **Arginine:** This amino acid has been shown to enhance healing in certain people and increases blood flow.

Diet for Wound Care: Suggestions for a healthy meal plan during your treatment.

- Most importantly, take a good quality multivitamin. It must contain at least the RDA of zinc, iron, and copper. To consume the necessary vitamins, add foods from the list below: Vitamin A, Vitamin C, and Trace Minerals.
- Multiply your weight by 15 calories and .75 extra grams of protein. For your healing, you should be eating the specified amounts. Foods containing protein are listed below.
- Drink plenty of fluids, especially caffeine-free fluids (drinking water is the best for your wound to heal and the cheapest option). Add an extra half-ounce of fluid for every pound you weigh.
- If you do not feel like you can eat three large meals, try to eat 5-6 small meals and snacks. For your snack selection, choose a count-eat high protein and high nutrient foods.
- If you are having difficulty eating the recommended amount of protein, try a protein supplement such as Carnation Instant Breakfast, Boost, or Ensure. You can find recipes for protein shakes on the internet or in health promotion magazines.
- If you have no appetite and unable to eat, talk with your doctor about giving you appetite enhancing medication.
- A glass of red wine in the evening can enhance your appetite, but please note, 4 oz. is sufficient for this purpose.

Food List

Protein	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meats: Chicken, Beef, Pork, Venison, Fish, and Shellfish • Eggs • Dried Beans, Lentils, and Peanut Butter • Dairy Products: Milk and Yogurt 	
Vitamin A	Vitamin C
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Egg Yolks • Broccoli • Peaches • Carrots • Greens (Collard, Kale, Mustard, and Turnip) • Apricots • Tomatoes • Sweet Potatoes • Milk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Citrus Fruits and Juices: Orange, Lemon, Lime, Grapefruit • Kale • Cantaloupe • Green or Red Peppers • Tomatoes • Turnip Greens • Broccoli • Cabbage • Strawberries
Vitamin B-Complex	Trace Minerals: Iron
<u>Vitamin B6</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meat • Poultry • Fish • Whole Grain Breads/ Cereals <u>Vitamin B6 Folic Acid</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver/Kidney • Lean Meats • Eggs • Dark Green Vegetables • Whole Grain Breads/Cereals <u>Vitamin B12</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meat • Poultry • Fish • Eggs • Milk <u>Vitamin Thiamin</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Whole Grain Enriched Breads/ Cereals • Meats (Especially Pork) • Poultry • Fish • Eggs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Liver • Beef • Pork • Beans • Peanuts • Dried Peaches • Sardines • Tuna • Enriched Bread/Grains • Eggs • Oysters • Raisins • Spinach
Trace Minerals: Copper	Trace Minerals: Zinc
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nuts • Dried Beans • Dried Fruit • Whole Grain Cereals • Organ meats (Liver, Kidney, Brain, Heart, and Tongue) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Baked Potatoes or Sweet Potatoes • Dried Beans • Dried Peas • Fruit Juices • Milk • Oatmeal • Organ Meats(Liver, Kidney, Brain, Heart, and Tongue) • Rice • Shellfish • Spinach