

NUTRITION FOR WOUND HEALING



Good nutrition is an important part of wound-healing. During the healing process, your body needs increased amounts of calories, protein and vitamins.

Wounds must be well-fed to heal. Your body must add new tissue, replace fluids lost in wound drainage, manufacture enzymes to stimulate tissue growth and produce proteins to fight infection – all while maintaining itself as usual. No wonder it needs a little extra nutrition during this stressful time!

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

- You have unintentionally gained or lost 5% or more of your body weight in the past month or 10% in the last 6 months.
- You have a chronic disease such as heart or kidney disease.
- You have a stomach or intestinal tract disorder that interferes with absorption of nutrients.
- You have tooth or mouth disorders that interfere with eating or chewing.
- You eat alone much of the time or have trouble getting out for groceries.
- You take more than 3 medicines, including over-the-counter drugs.
- You are a person with diabetes and unable to control your blood sugar.
- You are suffering from depression.

It is very important that you communicate with your provider to make them aware of any of these warning signs, so **together** you can come up with solutions to address your challenges.

Suggestions for getting needed nutrients during your treatment

Take a good quality multivitamin which contains at least the recommended daily amount of zinc, iron and copper.

If you are having difficulty getting in the recommended amount of protein, try a protein supplement such as Juven®, Boost®, Ensure® or Carnation® Instant Breakfast. Consider adding a tablespoon of peanut butter or almond butter to your protein supplement to enhance the flavor. You can also find recipes for protein shakes on the internet or in health magazines.

Eat fat! Yes, there is such a thing as “good fat.” Many patients avoid fat, and this is one of the worst things you can do. Fat helps to decrease inflammation and keep your blood sugar stable. Drizzle a little extra olive oil on your food or sprinkle your favorite seasoning on an avocado for a healthy snack.

Drink plenty of fluids, especially those that are caffeine and sugar-free (water is the best and least expensive). Multiply your weight by 0.5 to determine needed fluid intake.

If you do not feel you can eat 3 large meals per day, try eating 5 or 6 small meals and snacks.