

# Eating Well for Wound Healing





## Introduction

The aim of this leaflet is to help you to have the correct diet to enable your wound to heal.

What you eat plays an important role in:

- ◇ Looking after your skin
- ◇ Improving your immune system to protect you against infection
- ◇ Reducing time in healing of wounds
- ◇ Controlling your weight
- ◇ Keeping you fit and healthy

No single food or food group can meet all your nutritional needs. A balanced diet, including the five different food groups, is required to obtain a full range of essential nutrients.

## Choosing a balanced diet

Use the Balance of Good Health to help plan your meals.

- ◇ All foods can be enjoyed as a part of a healthy diet. It is important to eat a variety of foods to get the right balance.  
Try to eat something from each food group as listed on the centre pages.
- ◇ Eat regularly through the day. Base your meals on starchy foods, such as bread, potatoes, pasta, rice and breakfast cereals.
- ◇ Try to eat plenty of fruit and vegetables  
– at least five servings a day.
- ◇ Eat moderate portions from the protein and dairy groups, you no longer need lots of extra protein unless you are still healing.
- ◇ It is important that you avoid dehydration. You need to drink at least six to eight cups a day. This quantity could be higher, depending on whether you are losing fluids from your wounds.

## Still healing

The healing process can take up to a year after your injury / surgery. You must try to eat a balanced diet and drink well whenever possible.

You will need extra protein and energy to heal, so make sure you choose foods from the:

- ◇ meat, fish and alternatives.  
e.g. meat, fish, poultry beans
- ◇ fatty and sugary foods  
eg sugary drinks, crisps, sweets,  
chocolate
- ◇ milk and dairy foods  
e.g. full cream milk, cheese, yoghurts.

If you do not feel like eating

- ◇ Eat smaller meals and snacks more often, for example, every two to three hours.
- ◇ Fortify your foods with extra protein and calories.

## Fruit and vegetables

- Fruit and vegetables are a great source of vitamins and minerals
- Aim for at least 5 portions daily.

1 portion is equal to:-

A small / dessert bowl of salad

2 tblsp of raw, cooked, frozen or canned vegetables

A small glass fruit juice

1 medium piece fruit e.g. an apple, banana, orange.

## Meat, fish and alternatives

- These are a good source of protein, vitamins and minerals, especially iron.
- Protein is important for maintaining and repairing body tissues.
- Sufficient protein is important in wound healing
- Include 2 - 3 portions daily.
  - 1 portion is equal to :-
  - 2-3 oz lean meat, poultry, oily fish
  - 4-5 oz white fish
  - 2 eggs (up to 7 a week)
  - 3 tblsp beans / lentils or dahl
  - 2 tblsp nuts / peanut butter.

## The Eat W



## Fatty and sugary f

- These are a valuable

## Well Plate



## oods

source of energy.

## Bread other cereals and potatoes

- These foods should be the main source of energy in our diets. They also provide B vitamins, some calcium and iron.
- Include these as a main part of every meal.

## Milk and dairy foods

- In addition to providing most of your calcium, these are also a good source of protein, vitamins and minerals.
- Try to include at least 3 portions daily.  
1 portion is equal to :-  
1/3 pint low fat (200ml) milk.  
Small pot of yoghurt/ fromage frais/  
cottage cheese.  
1oz (25g)/matchbox size piece of  
cheese.

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## How to fortify your food

### ◇ Fortified milk

To one pint of full cream milk add two to four tablespoons of powdered milk. This can be used to make drinks, custards, puddings, or on breakfast cereals.

### ◇ Add to soup

Grated cheese, cream, milk powder, baked beans or lentils

### ◇ Add to potatoes and vegetables

Grated cheese, cream, margarine or butter, salad cream, milk based sauces and fried onions.

### ◇ Add to breakfast cereals

Enriched milk, evaporated milk, yoghurt, syrup, honey, sugar, fresh or dried fruit.

### ◇ Add to puddings

Cream, custard, margarine / butter, evaporated or condensed milk, ice-cream, yoghurt, jam, honey, syrup or dried fruit.



## To help you increase the calories in your daily food

- ◇ Fats and sugars provide energy and make foods taste good so use butter, margarine, cream and fried foods generously. Add butter / margarine to vegetables, use thickly on bread, scones and fruit loaf.
- ◇ Cakes, pastries, biscuits, chocolate, crisps give extra energy, but take care that they don't spoil your appetite for more nourishing foods.
- ◇ Have a pudding twice a day such as: yoghurt, milk pudding, cake, trifle, fruit pie, sponge pudding with custard, milk jelly, mousse and ready prepared yoghurts.

## Over the counter supplements

Enriched drinks are sold in chemists and supermarkets. Sweet and savoury flavours are available. They may be taken as a drink between meals or be used to replace a meal occasionally. The natural or unflavoured varieties may be added to puddings and soups.

## Healed

Once you have healed, you should go back to a healthy diet, following the balance of health. At this stage it is easy to gain weight rapidly, especially if you stay on a high fat diet and your activity levels are low.

If you would like advice on this change of diet and lifestyle, please contact your Dietitian.

## Vitamin and mineral supplements

You may have been prescribed vitamin and mineral supplements. Please ask your dietitian how long you need to take them. As a general rule, they are no longer necessary if you have healed.

## Personal target / Action plan

Patient's  
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Date \_\_\_\_\_

### Weight record

You should weigh yourself once a week, in the morning, before having breakfast.

Be careful not to gain or lose too much weight too quickly.

Date	Weight	Weight Change	Comments

Your weight should stay the same throughout treatment. If your weight changes, please let your nurse know.

## Further Questions

Should you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact us:

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics,  
Tel: 01342 414445

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Department of Nutrition and Dietetics  
Issue 3 - Ref. No. 0053  
Approved by the Patient Information Group  
October 2015 - October 2018

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