



## **Patient Education on Diet**

**A moderate amount of a wide variety of foods is ideal. Your physical and mental well-being depends a lot on what you eat. Eating right can improve your general health and protect you from diseases.**

### **Are You Short Of Breath While Eating?**

**What you eat affects your body's ability to resist infections. How you eat is equally important: the way you eat may affect the way you breathe. If shortness of breath interferes with the enjoyment of your meals, here are a few helpful guidelines.**

- Eat slowly - pause occasionally, and put your utensils down between bites.
  - Take small bites and chew thoroughly with your mouth closed.
  - Eat six small meals and not three big meals a day. There is no need to fuss over the extra meals. You can eat the servings of milk, bread, and fruit or dessert between the cooked meals.
  - Breathe evenly while chewing. Take a few deep breaths if you have to.
  - Instead of skipping your morning meal because of shortness of breath, drink a liquid breakfast.
- Consult your physician if you have any questions.

### **Do You Feel Bloating?**

**Some foods make your body healthy and therefore make breathing easier. Other foods make breathing more difficult. Avoid gas-forming foods that may bloat your stomach and make breathing difficult for**

you. You can determine which foods affect you by having trial periods and observing the results.

## Are You Overweight?

If you are overweight, your doctor will be happy to suggest a proper diet for your condition. Excess weight makes your heart and lungs work harder. Also, your extra body weight may be interfering with your breathing and demanding more oxygen.

### Trying to stay slim

When you're trying to lose weight, you need all the help you can get. The following tips are worth bearing in mind.

### Preparing foods

1. Reduce fat and avoid sugar
2. Prepare lots of bulky foods:
  - At least one fresh fruit at or between each meal
  - At least two vegetables at lunch and dinner

### Eating right

1. Eat more slowly. Chew your foods well. This also helps you to breathe easier.
2. Take time to sit down and enjoy your meals.
3. If you nibble while you watch television, take up a hobby that will keep your hands busy and out of the cookie jar.

### Drinking right

1. Drink less coffee, teas and colas. Caffeine can stimulate your appetite.
2. Quench thirst with water, decaffeinated coffee or herbal teas without caffeine.
3. Watch out at cocktail time.
4. Avoid sweetened juices and drinks. Try mixing fruit juice with seltzer water. Just think—one cup of apple juice has the same calories as three apples!

## Do You Feel Weak?

If your condition has made you less active than before, your muscles may be getting smaller and weaker. To rebuild your muscles, you need vitamins and minerals from fruits, vegetables and grains. You also need extra protein. Weakness may also result from diuretics or water pills that cause the body to lose potassium. Other diuretics, however, spare your body from losing potassium. Check with your doctor. He may suggest that you need to add more potassium-rich foods to your diet such as milk, oranges, orange juice, dried fruits, bananas, fresh pineapple, beef, and potatoes. Consult your physician if you feel weak.

## Shake The Salt Habit?

Your doctor may have suggested that you restrict your salt or sodium intake. Salt refers to sodium chloride (NaCl). When it comes to your health, the real concern is with the sodium (Na) part of salt. Your lung condition may have put a strain on your heart. Eating excessive salt may cause your body to retain extra water and therefore increase your blood volume. Your heart then has to work harder and your breathing may become more difficult. Too much salt may also cause leg and ankle swelling.

Here are some tips on how to enjoy eating the low-sodium way:

1. Begin by not using salt at the table, and then slowly decrease the use of salt in cooking. You'll get used to the taste.
2. Use onions, garlic and peppers in place of salt. The uses of herbs and spices are limitless.
3. If you're uneasy about experimenting with low salt cooking, pick up a low-salt cookbook.
4. Use fresh meats and frozen vegetables. If you depend on processed foods, buy the low sodium or low salt versions.

5. Switch to lower sodium snacks like unsalted popcorn and nuts, yogurt, fruits, or crisp raw vegetables.
6. Read food labels and avoid or use sparingly products that have the word salt, sodium, Na, or soda in the first three ingredients listed.
7. Unless prescribed by your doctor, try to stay away from salt substitutes or "light" salts. Potassium has been substituted and there may be a danger of potassium overload in some people.

#### **Sources of sodium or salt that you should limit or avoid:**

- Salted or smoked meats such as ham, bologna, salt pork, bacon, sausage, corned beef, cold cuts or hot dogs.
- Food prepared in brine such as sauerkraut, pickles or olives.
- Condiments like soy sauce, steak sauce, garlic salt, onion salt, lemon pepper catsup, prepared mustard or MSG (monosodium glutamate).
- Snacks like salted popcorn, nuts, pretzels and potato chips.
- Processed foods such as prepared soups, canned vegetables, or cheeses.
- Beverages such as vegetable juices, club soda and beer.

**Consult your physician if you have any questions or before making changes in your diet.**

### **Do You Drink Enough Liquids?**

**Drinking sufficient amounts of liquids helps keep your mucus thin and therefore easier to cough up. When mucus does not accumulate, your breathing is easier. Also, the chances of having infections are lessened. You should drink 6-8 glasses of fluid a day unless you have a medical condition in which liquids should be restricted.**

#### **What to drink**

- Water is actually our most vital nutrient and yet is often neglected. Use it as a beverage and in soups.
- Fruit juices, while not necessarily low in calories, provide essential vitamins and minerals.
- Decaffeinated coffee and decaffeinated tea may spare you most—but not all—of the adverse effects of caffeine.

- Milk is a good drink, and contains most nutrients except iron and vitamin C.

### **What not to drink**

- Drinks containing alcohol are high in calories and have limited nutritional value. Too much alcohol may slow down your breathing and may inhibit your ability to cough up mucus.
- Soft drinks have no nutritional value and should not be used to increase your fluid intake, especially if you have a medical condition which requires you to restrict your calories.
- "Fruit-flavored drinks" are really sugared water with very little fruit juice in them. These sweetened drinks are not the best way to quench your thirst. The sugar actually increases the body's need for water. Fruits, though juicy, contribute insignificant amounts to your total fluid intake.

**Consult your physician if you have any questions or before making changes in your diet.**

### **Do You Need A Multivitamin or Mineral Supplement?**

**Vitamins are organic substances from living matter—plants and animals. They are required in the diet in such tiny amounts that all the needed vitamins together add up to about an eighth of a teaspoon a day. If you regularly eat a variety of fresh and not overly processed foods, the answer is "NO."**

**Unfortunately, you probably don't eat this way. You may, therefore, benefit from a low-potency, well-balanced multiple vitamins and mineral supplement if you:**

- Have a poor diet
- Eat out alot
- Eat highly processed convenience foods
- Eat high fat and high sugar snacks
- Skip meals regularly
- Frequently eat less than 1500 calories per day
- Have an illness, anemia, injury or are recovering from any of these
- Take medicines daily (e.g., certain antibiotics, anticonvulsants, diabetes drugs)

- Are a heavy smoker
- Have a lot of stress
- Are pregnant or take oral contraceptives
- Consume alcoholic beverages excessively

Again, use only low-potency, well-balanced multiple supplements and take no more than one daily.

You may have heard that "natural" supplements are better than the so-called synthetic ones. There is no difference. The only natural vitamins are found in foods.

Supplements are most effective when taken with meals since food helps in their absorption and use by the body. Also, smaller doses are absorbed more effectively than one large dose. Therefore, a supplement with the daily dose broken down into two or three tablets is the most effective...if you can remember to take them.

Finally, supplements should not take the place of a healthy diet of fresh, unprocessed foods.

Consult your physician if you have any questions about supplements.

## Are You Getting Enough Fiber?

Fiber is that portion of vegetables, fruits, grains and beans which passes through or digestive tract into the large intestine almost without being digested. Once in the large intestine, about half of the fiber is fermented by intestinal bacteria.

How fiber can help you

**Bowel function**

Fiber is able to absorb many times its weight in water and increase the bulk of stool. Fiber acts like a sponge in the large intestine, drawing water into feces, making the stool larger and softer to pass. However, patients with bowel disorders should not start a high-fiber diet without first consulting their physician.

**Weight control**

Fiber itself has few, if any, calories. Many fibrous foods, especially fruits and vegetables, are themselves lower in calories. It also takes a

long time to chew most of the fibrous foods. This slows down the process of eating, allowing time for the signals of "fullness" to reach your brain before you have overeaten.

### **Diabetes**

Another recently demonstrated benefit of dietary fiber is its effect on blood-sugar levels and insulin requirements. Fiber seems to slow the absorption of carbohydrates and some carbohydrates may actually pass through the digestive tract unabsorbed.

You know that you are getting enough fiber by using your built-in feedback mechanism: your stool. Large soft stools are the result of a high fiber diet. Small, hard stools result from a diet low in fiber.

### **Foods high in fiber include:**

- whole grain breads and cereals—bran, whole wheat, rye or pumpernickel
- fresh fruits
- fresh vegetables and salads
- legumes: chick peas, lentils, dried beans, dried peas, etc. Consult your physician if you have any questions.