

# PROPER NUTRITION

Maintaining good nutrition is an important of your recovery and your return to your normal life. After surgery, your diet will gradually be advanced to a clear liquid diet and then solid foods as tolerated.

You may need to continue following some of the dietary restrictions that you followed prior to surgery such as a diabetic diet. These restrictions may be temporary or permanent.

As you regain your appetite, you will be encouraged to eat sufficient calories and protein to meet your post-operative healing needs.

Long term nutritional needs include following general guidelines for good nutrition (everything in moderation!). It is important to eat a variety of foods each day that include the appropriate amount of carbohydrates, protein, fats, vitamins and minerals and fluids.

Carbohydrates are a major source of energy. They are found in starches, bread, fruit, vegetables, and milk.

Protein provides some energy but is primarily used to build muscles and tissues. It is found in animal and dairy products and to a lesser extent in legumes, beans and grains.

Fat is the storage form of energy. It is more concentrated and therefore provides twice as many calories as carbohydrates and proteins. It is found in meat and dairy products, oils, and nuts.

## PRINCIPLES OF GOOD NUTRITION

To maintain a healthy body after your transplant, it is important to eat the right amount of calories to help you reach and stay at a reasonable weight. The amount of calories you need depends on your size, age, and activity level. A diet that is excessive in calories or fat will cause weight gain – a potential side effect of transplant in some patients.

### EAT LESS FAT

- To reduce fat intake in your daily meal plan eat fish, poultry (without skin), and lean cuts of meat. Watch portion size. Try to limit your portion to 3-5 ounces a meal.
- Limit high fat foods such as cold cuts, bacon, nuts, gravies, creamy sauces, salad dressings, butter, margarine and solid shortening. Do not fry foods.
- Avoid croissants and other flaky or creamy pastries. They are loaded with fat and simple sugars (sugar turns to fat when eaten in excessive amounts).
- Use skim or 1% fat milk, low fat yogurt, and clear dressings (oil and vinegar).
- Read labels. Other terms for fat include lipids, mono-,\_di, and triglycerides. If fat is one of the first five ingredients listed, it is a high fat product.

### EAT SUGAR IN MODERATION

- Limit simple sugars found in cookies and pastries (these are also full of fat), candies, honey, syrup, soft drinks (one 12 ounce can contains 9 teaspoons of sugar), and sugary cereals. The bulk of your diet should be in the form of complex carbohydrates such as breads, pastas, grains, legumes.
- Read labels and look for hidden sources of sugar such as sucrose, glucose, dextrose, lactose, fructose, corn syrup, honey, molasses, and maple syrup.

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## USE LESS SODIUM

- Sodium is an electrolyte found in salt. Too much salt can cause the body to retain water, and in some people, raise blood pressure. Using too much salt may make your symptoms worse. The recommended guideline for safe and adequate intake of salt is 1-3 grams a day.
- Sodium is most commonly found in the following types of foods:
  - Convenience foods (instant, prepared, frozen)
  - Fast foods
  - Prepared luncheon meats
  - Cured and smoked meats
  - processed foods
  - canned food
  - mixed seasonings
  - pickled foods
- Hidden sources of sodium include: baking powder, baking soda, monosodium glutamate (MSG, Accent, Adobo), and meat tenderizers. Non-food sources of sodium may include laxatives and antacids (check with your doctor).

## MEDICATIONS AND YOUR DIET

Some medications may cause a rise in your blood sugars. The nutritionist will work with you to develop a meal plan that will minimize the intake of concentrated sweets.

Some medications may also affect your potassium levels. The following is a list of high potassium foods which you may need to limit:

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|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| -Fresh oranges/orange juice | -avocado, tomato     |
| -Banana, prunes, dates      | -potato with skin    |
| -Dried nuts, coconut        | -dried beans/legumes |

The nutritionist will provide you with a more complete list of foods with both high and low potassium.

## HELPFUL HINTS:

- Avoid processed foods. Processing usually adds calories in the form of sugar or fat, and also contains a lot of sodium used in preservatives.
- Beware of diabetic and dietetic foods. Read labels carefully. Diabetic foods may be high in fat and salt. Dietetic foods may be low in fat, but high in sugar.
- Drink lots of fluids. Avoid juices and caffeinated beverages as juices can contribute to increased calories. Caffeine can also cause you to become dehydrated.
- Do not drink alcohol of any kind.

Prior to discharge, the nutritionist will work with you to develop an appropriate meal plan to meet your nutritional needs.

Maintaining an appropriate weight, following basic good nutritional principles, and exercising as tolerated will aid in promoting successful post-transplant outcomes.