Wrightington, Wigan and Leigh Teaching Hospitals
NHS Foundation Trust

Nutrition for Wound Healing

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Patient Information

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Nutrition for wound healing

Good nutrition is essential to help with the healing of wounds and pressure injuries. A well-balanced diet can help wounds to heal more quickly. If you have a wound or pressure injury, your body needs more of some nutrients to repair body tissues.

Energy (calories)

If you are **underweight** or **unintentionally losing weight,** you are at a higher risk of developing pressure injuries. Not consuming enough calories can also delay wound healing.

Tips for increasing energy in your diet

- Replace low fat/low sugar foods with full fat versions
- Add extra cheese, butter, cream, olive oil, mayonnaise, milk powder, nut butters etc. to the foods you eat
- Drink milky drinks (made with whole milk).

Tips for increasing your appetite

- Try eating little and often, aiming for 3 small meals and 2-3 snacks per day

- Try to eat at regular times, so that your body knows when to expect food.

If you are **overweight**, eating a varied, balanced diet and including plenty of fluids can help with wound healing. Aim to maintain your current weight while your wounds heal. Being more mobile can help to lower the risk of pressure injuries.

If you have **diabetes**, good control of blood sugar levels can help with wound healing.

Protein

Protein is essential for our bodies to grow and repair. Protein requirements are higher if you have a wound or pressure injury, so increasing your protein intake can help with wound healing.

Sources of protein

- Meat and poultry
- Fish
- Eggs
- Dairy products, e.g. milk, cheese, yoghurt

- Nuts and seeds
- Soya products, including soya milk
- Meat alternatives, e.g. mycoprotein (Quorn), seitan, soya.

Tips for increasing protein in your diet

- Include a source of protein at each meal
- Include high protein snacks between meals, e.g. cheese and crackers, full fat yoghurt, scotch egg, nuts/nut butters, houmous.

Vitamins and Minerals

You can get all your body's vitamin and mineral requirements through eating a varied and balanced diet. Some vitamins and minerals contribute to the wound healing process.

Nutrient	Food Sources

Vitamin A	Liver, milk, eggs, dark green leafy vegetables, yellow/orange coloure fruit and vegetables (e.g. carrots, red/orange peppers, sweet potato)
Vitamin C	Citrus fruits, peppers, broccoli, tomatoes, potatoes
Vitamin E	Vegetable and seed oils (e.g. olive oil, rapeseed oil, sunflower oil), nu and seeds (e.g. almonds, peanuts, sunflower seeds), sweet potat avocado
Copper	Nuts, dried fruit, wholegrain cereals, offal
Iron	Meat, fish, eggs, dark green vegetables, breakfast cereals, nuts, bread
Zinc	Meat, liver, eggs, seafood, leafy and root vegetables

If you have poor intake, or can't eat a varied diet, you can take an A-Z type vitamin and mineral supplement. These are available to buy from supermarkets and pharmacies, or alternatively, speak with your GP.

Fluid

Drinking enough fluid is essential for good health. On average, adults need between 1600ml and 2000ml every day. All fluids count, e.g. water, milk, juice, tea, coffee etc.

Useful measures

- Teacup ~150ml
- Mug ~250ml
- Glass ~200ml
- Pint glass ~568ml

Tips for staying well hydrated

- Drink little and often
- Keep a glass or bottle of water within easy reach
- Drink a full glass with medications, rather than a few sips
- Foods with a high-water content, such as fruit, soup, jelly also contribute to hydration.

Oral Nutritional Supplements

If you are unable to meet your nutritional requirements through diet, nutritional supplements may be recommended. This need would be assessed by a Dietitian or Doctor.



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