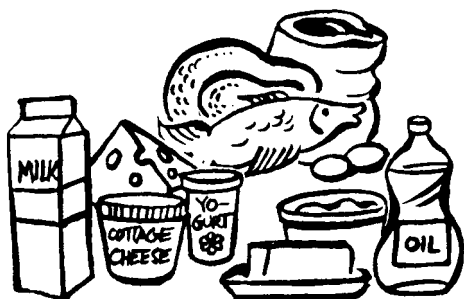


Eating Well: Patients with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD)

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WHAT IS CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE (COPD)?

COPD refers to diseases that are characterized by limited airflow to the lungs. The two main diseases in COPD are chronic bronchitis and pulmonary emphysema.

People with COPD tend to have trouble breathing. Even simple daily activities can make COPD patients feel “out of breath.”

WHY IS GOOD NUTRITION IMPORTANT FOR COPD PATIENTS?

COPD patients may lose weight because they feel too tired or short of breath to eat. Sometimes, these patients say they feel full after eating only a small amount. But good nutrition is especially important for these patients.

Why? The first reason is that breathing requires much more energy in a patient with COPD. A healthy person requires less than 100 calories a day to provide the energy to breathe. A patient with COPD requires between 430 to 720 calories a day to breathe. Because of these extra calorie requirements, poor nutrition can cause excessive weight loss.

A second reason is that poor nutrition can worsen the symptoms of COPD. Patients who do not eat properly will experience a weakening of the respiratory muscles, making breathing more difficult. They may also be more likely to get an infection.

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WHAT FOODS ARE GOOD TO EAT?

You should try to eat a diet that is balanced in nutrition. Try to eat some dairy products, protein foods, fruits, vegetables, and breads and grains each day.

Also, try to eat more protein and fat, and less starchy foods (like bread) and desserts.

You should eat foods that are easy to chew. These will take less energy to eat. For example, eat cooked vegetables instead of raw vegetables, and canned or stewed fruits instead of raw fruits. Casseroles are usually easy to eat, because they are soft and the ingredients are in small pieces. Egg, chicken, or tuna salad are other good choices.

Liquids can offer energy and nutrients, and are easy to eat. You might want to have a milkshake or a yogurt shake. Also, drink fruit juice or clear liquid nutritional supplements instead of water to get extra calories.

Ask your doctor or dietitian if you should take a daily vitamin or need advice on other foods to eat.

WHAT FOODS SHOULD I AVOID?

There is no need to avoid any food if it does not make you uncomfortable or tired.

If you feel full after eating only a small amount, you might want to avoid foods that cause gas, such as:

- Dried peas and beans
- Chickpeas
- Broccoli
- Cucumbers
- Onions

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- Radishes
- Cauliflower
- Cabbage
- Melon

You should also avoid low-calorie foods that may fill you up, such as lettuce, celery, and hot-air-popped popcorn.

INCREASING CALORIES

Try to eat these foods or add them to recipes. They are high in calories and will help you get the energy you need.

- Butter
- Margarine
- Whole milk
- Cream
- Mayonnaise
- Cream cheese
- Grated cheese
- Sour cream
- Gravy
- Full-fat yogurt with fruit
- Honey
- Dried fruits
- Chopped nuts
- Fruit juice
- Ground meat
- Tuna packed in oil
- Sardines
- Eggs
- Peanut butter
- Applesauce
- Berries
- Sweet potatoes
- Yams
- Green peas
- Nut and/or fruit breads

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OTHER TIPS

- Keep snacks handy.
- Prepare food in large quantities when you feel well. Then freeze individual portions to reheat later.
- Eat several small meals and snacks instead of three large meals each day.
- Eat slowly.
- Breathe deeply in between bites.
- Sit up while eating. This will be easiest on your lungs.
- Relax before you eat.
- Play soft music during meals to help you relax.
- Make sure you are well rested before meals.
- Look forward to meals!

NOTES: