

Nutrition for Wound Healing

Your body needs extra energy (calories), protein, vitamins and minerals when you have a wound that is healing. Eating well at this time helps your body to heal faster and fight infection. The information below can help you to reach these requirements. We generally recommend that you do not try to lose weight until your wound has fully healed because not eating enough healthy food can sometimes slow down wound healing.

1. Have a regular meal plan

Make sure to include breakfast, lunch and dinner each day. You may find eating a 'supper' before bed helpful e.g. a bowl of cereal with full fat milk or a toasted sandwich.

2. Protein

Try to include a source of protein with each of your main meals. Protein helps to build and maintain muscle, heal tissue and support a healthy immune system. Your body needs lots of extra protein while it is healing.

Protein at breakfast time	Protein at lunch and dinner
Eggs, beans, nut butter, nuts and seeds, milk, yogurt, cheese.	Meat, chicken, fish, beans, eggs, lentils, chickpeas, falafel, tofu/tempeh, quorn, cheese

3. Include high energy snacks

Include high energy snacks between your meals. Aim for **at least 2-3** of these each day. Be sure to carry extra non-perishable snacks in your handbag to make sure you do not miss your snacks.

- Full fat yogurt with fruit & seeds
- Nuts/trail mix
- Crackers & cheese
- Oat crackers with banana & peanut butter
- Pita bread with hummus
- Granola with yogurt
- Slice of brown bread with avocado & tomato/boiled egg/ hummus /
- tuna, sweet corn & mayonnaise / chicken & cheese
- Apple slices & peanut butter
- Wholemeal scone
- Oat biscuits & glass of milk
- Custard or rice pudding
- Hot chocolate & cereal bar
- Flapjack/granola bar
- High energy smoothie (see below)

4. Drink enough fluid

Fluid helps oxygen and nutrients get to the site of your wound. Aim for at least 2 litres each day (8 glasses). You can count water, milk, juice, tea and soup as part of your fluid intake. Try to avoid sugary drinks. Choose sugar free alternatives and sweeten hot beverages with a low calorie sweetener. Don't wait until you are thirsty to drink. Keep a bottle or glass near you all day.

If you find it difficult to eat regularly, try to drink your energy and protein. Fluids that contain energy include milk, milkshakes and hot chocolate, yogurt drinks, smoothies and juices.

5. Eat your fruit & vegetables

Fruit and vegetables contain lots of the vitamins and minerals your body needs to heal. Try to include 5-7 servings each day. 1 serving is 1 medium fruit, 1 handful of veg, 2 handfuls of salad or 1 bowl of soup.

Vitamin C is particularly important when forming new tissue. Good sources of vitamin C are oranges, berries, kiwis, 100% fruit juice (1 glass per day), tomatoes, peppers, broccoli and cauliflower.

To increase your fruit and veg intake try:

- Add fruit to your porridge or cereal
- Have soup with a sandwich at lunch time
- Aim for 2 handfuls of veg at dinner time
- Have 1 glass of 100% fruit juice each day
- Snack on fruit or vegetables sticks e.g. carrots & hummus
- Add in extra veg when making curries, stews etc.

6. Iron

Iron is important for healthy blood cells which are essential for wound repair. The body absorbs iron best from animal sources. You can also get some iron from plant based sources. Taking plant based iron sources with some vitamin C can help your body to absorb the iron e.g. eggs & orange juice.

Animal based iron sources	Plant based iron sources
Meat (particularly red meat e.g. beef, pork, lamb)	Fortified breakfast cereal e.g. Weetabix, Special K
Chicken	Dark green leafy vegetables e.g. Spinach, kale
Fish	Beans & lentils
Liver	Nuts & Dried fruit
Eggs	Whole grains e.g. brown rice

Drinking tea and coffee during meal times can make it harder for your body to absorb all of the iron in food. Try to leave your tea and coffee until 30-60minutes after your meal.

You may require an extra iron supplement to help with your healing. You should speak to your healthcare provider about this.

High Energy Smoothie recipe:

- 1 frozen banana
- Handful of berries (or your favourite fruit!)
- 125g full fat yogurt
- 2 tablespoons oats
- Handful of nuts / nut butter
- ~100mls Orange juice/milk to blend
- Optional: Avocado

Place all ingredients into a blender and whizz up!

Sample Meal Plan

Breakfast:

- Porridge made with milk topped with berries/banana and nuts/seeds
- Scrambled/boiled eggs with wholegrain toast & avocado/mushrooms/spinach
- Beans on wholegrain toast
- Wholegrain cereal with fruit and seeds
- Wholegrain toast with nut butter and banana
- Granola with yogurt & berries

And 1 glass of fortified orange juice or milk

Lunch:

- Wholegrain sandwich with chicken, cheese & salad (or your favourite filling!) Soup (chicken/lentil) with wholegrain bread
- Beans and/or eggs on toast
- Pasta with tuna, sweet corn and mayonnaise & side salad
- Pitta bread/wrap filled with falafel, hummus and salad
- Burrito bowl with beef/chicken/beans, rice, lettuce, sweet corn, tomatoes and guacamole/cheese & salsa
- Cous cous with roast vegetables and cheese
- Leftover dinner

Dinner:

- Spaghetti bolognese with side salad
- Chicken & vegetable stir-fry with noodles
- Cajun salmon with homemade wedges and vegetables
- Meat or bean chilli with rice, guacamole & corn on the cob
- Chicken, roast vegetables and potatoes
- Homemade burger in wholegrain bun with corn on the cob and homemade coleslaw

Supper:

- A bowl of cereal & milk
- Toast with peanut butter and banana
- A granola bar & hot chocolate

Don't forget to include high energy snacks and drink plenty of fluids between your meals.

Tip!

Women who are breastfeeding need 5 servings of calcium rich foods each day. 1 serving = 200mls milk, 125g pot of yogurt or 25g cheese (2 thumbs). Try adding a glass of milk to meals or snacking on yogurt & crackers with cheese to help you reach these requirements.