

Nutrition and Dehydration

Your Guide to Healthy Eating After Organ Transplant

A healthy diet will lead to a healthy life style and a healthy organ.

Short Term Goals

Immediately after a transplant patients need to an increase in calories and protein to help the body recover from the stress of surgery and to promote healing. Healthy eating will ensure that you are getting enough calories to help prevent infection and muscle loss.

During the first few weeks after surgery, eat healthy foods at meal and snack times.

If you have trouble with your weight, or are not hungry, call the transplant team. Some patients may need additional food supplements like Boost or Ensure or a feeding tube to get enough calories to heal.

Try to drink at least 8 to 10 8-ounce glasses of water per day. Some people may be asked to drink more or less water and some people may be asked to drink less fluid based on their health needs.

A dietician can help you with diet and fluids.

Dehydration

Signs of Dehydration:

- Low blood pressure, when standing up
- Dizziness when standing up
- Fast heart rate
- Weight loss
- Cramping in arms, hands, legs and feet
- Weakness
- Confusion
- Dry mouth
- Low urine output
- Constipation or stomach pain

Long Term Goals

Maintain a healthy weight

Weight gain after a transplant can be a problem because your appetite is better and you can eat more things.

- Prednisone may cause hunger which may cause weight gain if you eat too much
- Weight gain after transplant may cause high blood pressure, diabetes, heart disease, joint or bone disease and may shorten your life or the life of your new organ
- Call the transplant team or your local doctor if you have questions about your weight.

Your local doctor or your transplant team will be watching your cholesterol and triglyceride levels yearly. If you have any concerns about

your cholesterol or triglyceride levels, please call your local doctor or your transplant team.

For information on healthy eating or for recipe ideas, visit these web sites:

The American Heart Association
www.americanheart.org

The American Diabetes Association
www.diabetes.org

Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation
www.jdrf.org

Bone Health

Anti-rejection medicines may cause bone problems. Poor bone health before transplant may make worsen bone health after transplant more likely. To help bone health:

- Eat calcium rich foods (low fat dairy and cheese)
- Take calcium and Vitamin D supplements as ordered
- Do weight bearing exercises, like walking
- Do not smoke

Blood Sugar

You may get diabetes, as a result of taking the anti-rejection medicines Prednisone, Cyclosporine and Tacrolimus. If your blood sugars are not well controlled with medicines, you may be asked to follow a diabetic diet.

While you are in the hospital, the diabetes team will see you.

Avoid grapefruit juice and pomegranate juice as they can increase with anti-rejection levels.

Nutritional Supplements

Do not take any nutritional supplements, including: shakes, powders, energy drinks or electrolyte replacements, without calling the transplant team.