

Eat To Feel Better

EATING TO FEEL BETTER

Good food, like good medicine, works to heal and repair your body and to make it stronger against disease. That's true for everyone, but it's especially important for you because your eating habits may be affecting the way you breathe.

Some foods put your body in better condition and make breathing easier. Others can make your condition worse.

Your daily meals also make a large demand on your time, your energy, and your income. By planning healthier and easier mealtimes, you can help yourself not only to better breathing but to a more enjoyable quality of life.

What mealtime changes could help you? Read this with a pencil in hand to underline the ideas you might use. Then ask your doctor for recommendations. For instance, you may need more fat and fewer carbohydrates than someone without lung disease.

WHICH FOODS DO YOU CHOOSE?

Are you missing some of the foods your body needs to strengthen and repair itself? Most of us choose our foods from habit, without much thought for what they do for us. Check the food chart on page 20 to be sure your daily meals include enough foods from all four basic groups. Use the chart when you plan your meals.

Most Americans could eat better by adding more fruits and vegetables and cutting out some of the junk foods like soft drinks, packaged cakes and cookies, alcoholic drinks, and salty snacks.

It will be easier to make changes in your meals if family members join you. A healthier diet will be good for them, too.

What could you change for a better balance?

ARE YOU SHORT OF BREATH AT MEALTIMES?

You can lose interest in the best of foods if shortness of breath makes eating hard work for you. Try these helps:

- Eat six small meals a day instead of three big meals. That will cut down on the extra oxygen you need to chew and digest each meal. It need not mean extra work to prepare the extra meals. Just set aside foods that can be eaten between your cooked meals, foods like salads, fruit, breads, milk, and desserts.
- Eat slowly, and chew foods well.
- Try to keep breathing evenly while you chew. Stop if you need to. Relax and take a few deep breaths.
- If you're very short of breath in the morning, it's better to have a liquid instant breakfast than to skip the meal.
- If you're overweight, your extra body fat may be interfering with your breathing and demanding more

oxygen. Ask your doctor or dietitian for a safe weight-reducing meal plan.

- Avoid gas-forming foods if they bloat your abdomen. The following foods may bloat your abdomen, making it harder than usual for you to breathe:

Peas	Melons	Broccoli
Onions	Cabbage	Raw apples
Corn	Cauliflower	Turnips
Cucumbers	Brussels sprouts	
Beans (except green beans)		

DO YOU FEEL WEAK?

If your illness has made you less active than in the past, your muscles may be getting smaller and weaker. To rebuild muscles, you need extra protein from milk products and meats and vitamins and minerals from fruits, vegetables, and grains.

Weakness may also result from diuretics (water pills) that cause your body to lose potassium. Your doctor may suggest that you add more high-potassium foods to your diet.

Foods high in potassium include:

Milk	Dried fruits	Potatoes
Oranges	Bananas	Fresh pineapple
Orange juice	Beef	

IS YOUR STOMACH UPSET?

If stomach upset often keeps you from eating or keeping your food down, your doctor needs to know. It could be a reaction to a medicine or another condition that needs treatment.

It may help to take bronchodilators and other lung-clearing treatments at least an hour before meals. Then the effects from the medicine will be at their peak by the time you eat.

DO YOU HAVE A POOR APPETITE?

If you don't feel like eating, ask yourself why.

■ Is your medicine turning off your appetite?

If you think it is, check with your doctor. Ask if the medicine may be taken with milk or meals. A different form of medicine or a change in the time you take it may be helpful.

■ Do you have a tea-and-toast habit?

Poor nutrition can cause a poor appetite. Good meals will stir your appetite back to life. If poor appetite is causing you to lose too much weight, your doctor may suggest a food supplement.

■ Are your feelings about your illness taking away your appetite?

Perhaps you think of meals as a social time, a time to enjoy. If you're deeply unhappy about being ill, you may feel like pulling back from those old pleasures. Without good food, you become even weaker, shorter of breath, and more depressed than ever.

It may help you to think of eating as one way you can take control over your health and strength. Sharing

your feelings with a close friend or a family member may help you cope with them. You should also talk to your doctor about these feelings.

HAS YOUR DOCTOR TOLD YOU TO CUT DOWN ON SALT?

Sometimes eating salt can cause your body to hold too much water. Some people get used to eating foods without added salt and come to like them that way. If you find saltless foods too boring:

- Ask your doctor to suggest a safe salt substitute.
- Add flavor to food with herbs and spices. Use:
 - Thyme, rosemary, basil, or sage in meats, fish, soups, and sauces.
 - Vinegar or lemon juice in fish, vegetables, and salads.
 - Caraway seeds or sage in breads, noodles, and pork.
 - Cinnamon or nutmeg in breads, fruits, and pastries.

IS COOKING GOOD MEALS TOO MUCH WORK FOR YOU?

If you're the family cook or if you live alone, you may be thinking that the advice to eat better meals means too much extra work. Perhaps you're depending on fast foods or convenience foods to make mealtimes easy. But many of those foods are high in salt, fats, and sugar and low in the vitamins and minerals you need. And they're expensive.

Some of the finest natural foods are simple to prepare. Here are a few. You'll be able to think of many more.

Good-for-you fast foods

Milk	Fresh fruit	Eggs
Cheese	Applesauce, canned	Tuna (salt-free)
Yogurt	Dried fruit	Cereals
Ice cream	Fruit juice	

Vegetables that need no peeling include baked potatoes, tomatoes, summer squash, asparagus, spinach, broccoli, and leafy greens.

Meats and fish are easy to prepare when they're baked or broiled.

If you prepare food ahead of time, you'll feel rested and able to enjoy your food at meals.

In some areas, meal plans are available, such as Meals on Wheels. Ask your visiting nurse or hospital social worker.

DO YOU DRINK ENOUGH LIQUIDS?

Drinking plenty of liquids helps keep your mucus thin and easy to cough up. That makes breathing easy and aids in preventing infections.

Note: Because of some other medical conditions, some persons should not drink extra liquids. Check with your doctor.

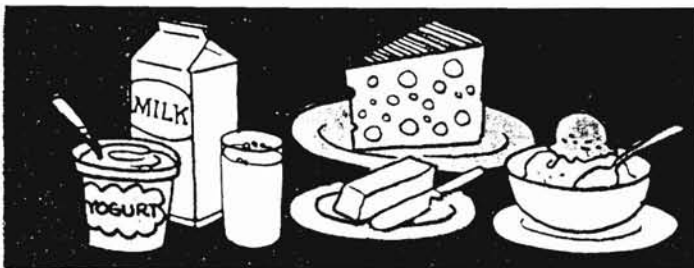
DO YOU USE ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES?

Alcoholic drinks have no food value, but they are high in calories. Too much alcohol can slow your breathing. Alcohol should never be used with sedatives or tranquilizers.

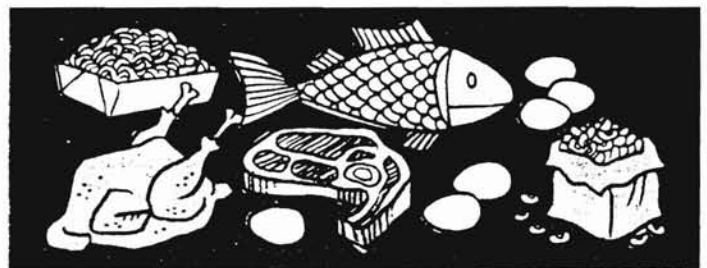
DO YOU NEED EXTRA VITAMINS?

If you eat all the foods you need, extra vitamins aren't needed or helpful. If you do take vitamins, a multivitamin tablet taken once a day is enough. Vitamins labeled "extra strength," "therapeutic," "geriatric," or "natural" cost more but give you no extra help. If you need any special vitamins, your doctor will prescribe them.

You Should Have Food From Each of These Groups Every Day.



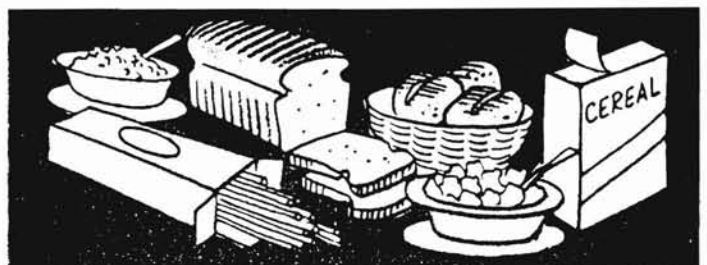
MILK GROUP (2 servings a day): Milk, cheese, yogurt, ice cream.



MEAT GROUP (2 servings): Includes meats, fish, eggs, dry beans.



FRUIT AND VEGETABLE GROUPS (4 servings): Includes green and yellow vegetables and fresh and dried fruit.



GRAIN GROUP (4 servings): Includes breads, cereals, pasta, and hominy.

10-4 STRATEGIES

10-4.1 CHRONIC OBSTRUCTIVE PULMONARY DISEASE

Exhibit 10-4.1.1 HINTS FOR EATING WISELY

Here are some ways you can help yourself eat meals that provide your body with the nutrients it needs:

- Choose foods that are easy for you to prepare. If you use all your energy to cook, you will not have enough strength left to eat the foods.
- Rest just before eating.
- Eat your main meal early if you are usually too tired to eat later in the day.
- Avoid foods that cause gas or bloating. They will make breathing more difficult.

Source: *Eating Well with Pulmonary Disease*. Ross Laboratories, Columbus, Ohio. © 1986.

Here are some other suggestions to help you limit the amount of carbohydrate and increase your intake of fat:

- Use artificial sweeteners.
- Use water-packed fruit or fruit with no added sugar.
- Add margarine or other sources of low-cholesterol fat to breads and vegetables.
- Drink only artificially sweetened soft drinks.
- Use artificially sweetened jams, jellies, and hard candies.

Exhibit 10-4.1.2 QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

INTRODUCTION

As a COPD patient, you must choose your foods carefully in order to eat well. You may be surprised to learn that what you eat can have an effect on your lungs. You may be asking yourself: "How will I know what I should be eating?" The answer to that question and other questions that COPD patients have asked are presented here.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

- **How does the type of food I eat affect my breathing?** Understanding the relationship between food and breathing is easier when you know how the lungs normally work. When a person breathes in, the lungs take in oxygen; when a person breathes out, the lungs send carbon dioxide out of the body. But the lungs of a person with COPD have trouble taking in oxygen and getting rid of carbon dioxide.

Your body uses food as fuel for all its activities. Oxygen is used to change the food into fuel, and carbon dioxide is formed as a waste product during this process. The whole process is called metabolism.

Foods contain three major nutrients—carbohydrate, fat, and protein. The metabolism of each nutrient requires a different amount of oxygen and produces a different amount of carbon dioxide. Thus, depending on what kinds of food you eat, you may have more or less carbon dioxide to breathe out of your body. Metabolism of carbohydrate forms the most carbon dioxide for the amount of oxygen used; metabolism of fat forms the least.

- **I always seem to feel weak. Should I eat more protein? Should I eat more carbohydrate to build up my strength like runners do before a marathon?** Many people with COPD, especially those who have had it a long time, tend to feel weak constantly. This weakness may be because they are retaining

too much carbon dioxide or because they are not getting sufficient oxygen. Not eating enough or eating too much of the wrong kinds of foods may add to the problem and will not nourish you properly.

You do need protein, but eating more of it will not make you feel peppier. Although protein can be used for energy when carbohydrate and fat are in short supply, protein's major role is in building muscle, blood, and other body tissues. Also, high-protein diets stimulate certain aspects of breathing. This poses no problem for people with healthy lungs but can make breathing seem harder for some people with COPD.

Eating extra carbohydrate gives runners energy, but it will give you more carbon dioxide. You will have to breathe deeper and take more breaths to remove the carbon dioxide from your body. This may be difficult for some people with COPD. So your doctor or dietitian may recommend that you eat less carbohydrate and more fat. Fat is a good energy source, and it doesn't produce as much carbon dioxide as carbohydrate.

If you are not eating as many calories as your dietitian recommends, boost your calorie intake with high-fat foods if possible. If you are already eating as much as you should, try replacing some high-carbohydrate foods with high-fat foods at the same caloric level. This may cut down on the carbon dioxide in your body and help you feel better.

- **I'm worried about cholesterol and saturated fats, so I've been trying to avoid fats. Won't increasing the fat in my diet add to my cholesterol?** Not all fats are high in cholesterol and saturated fats. Those that are high in cholesterol and saturated fats come mostly from animal sources (except for coconut and palm). You can tell that a fat is highly saturated because it usually turns solid in cool temperatures. For example, think of the layer of fat on top of a pot of homemade beef or chicken

continues

Exhibit 10-4.1.2 continued

soup that's been in the refrigerator. Polyunsaturated fats do not contain cholesterol. These are fats from plant sources, and they remain liquid at cold temperatures. An example is corn oil.

When you add fat to your diet, make it the polyunsaturated kind. Use liquid vegetable oils such as corn oil, soft margarine made from plant oils, and mayonnaise made with oil. Avoid animal fats such as butter and cut down on fatty meats since these foods are high in cholesterol.

Before you buy prepared products, read the labels. Many prepared foods list the cholesterol content on the ingredient panel. If you can buy either a product made with butter or one made with corn oil, choose the one made with corn oil.

- **After I eat a big meal, I have trouble breathing. How can I eat well without becoming uncomfortable?** Your body organs are not packed tightly inside your body; rather, they are separated with space. A muscular membrane called the diaphragm is in the space between the lungs and the stomach. The diaphragm moves down and up as your lungs fill with air and empty out. A full stomach presses into the space below the diaphragm. The diaphragm cannot move as far down, so the lungs do not fill so well.

Instead of eating three big meals a day, try dividing your day's food into five or six smaller portions. This way, your stomach will not fill as much after each meal. You can eat a smaller breakfast, lunch, and dinner and supply the rest of your nutritional needs for the day by having two or three between-meal snacks.

- **I eat a lot, but I am still losing weight. Why?** You lose weight when you use more calories than you eat. Maybe you are not getting as many calories as you think. You can find out how many calories you eat by recording everything you eat and drink for a few days and totaling the calories. Your dietitian can help you work this out.

More likely, however, your body is using more calories than you realize. Most people think they have to exercise to burn off calories. In fact, the body is continually using calories as fuel to perform such functions as breathing and fighting infection.

Weight loss is a common problem in patients with COPD. One reason is that more calories than normal are used for routine breathing. A person with lung disease can burn 10 times as many calories just breathing as does a healthy person.

- **If I eat more, will I start to get fat?** You will get fat only if you eat more calories than you use. A dietitian can calculate how many calories you use each day. Based on this calculation, the dietitian will recommend how many calories you should eat.

Eat as much as your dietitian recommends, but don't go over the limit. Too many calories may make you thick around the middle. Extra body weight demands more oxygen and can interfere with breathing. Also, eating too much—especially too much carbohydrate—may make your breathing harder. Get in the habit of weighing yourself regularly. Not only will the scale tell you if you're getting fat, it will also alert you that you may not be eating enough. You should see your doctor or dietitian if you continue to lose weight while following the recommended diet.

- **What should I do if I can't eat as much as my dietitian recommends?** You may find it difficult to meet your nutritional requirements with regular foods, especially if you need a lot of calories every day. Also, if your dietitian has suggested that you get as much as half of your calories from fat—the polyunsaturated, low-cholesterol variety—you might not be able to meet this goal easily with ordinary foods. So your dietitian may suggest you drink a liquid meal supplement called a medical nutritional product. Many people with high nutritional needs add a medical nutritional product to their diet. These products are so nutritious that they can be used as a complete diet by people who are unable to eat normal foods, or they can be added to regular foods for people who cannot eat enough.

- **My doctor told me to watch fluid intake. Does this mean I shouldn't use liquid nutritional products?** The amount of fluid in your body is related to your consumption of fluid and particularly to your sodium intake from salt, salty foods, sodium occurring naturally in foods, and sodium added during food processing. Don't eat more sodium and salt or drink more fluid than your doctor has allowed. Also, avoid fluids that have little nutritional value. Do you really need that mid-day soft drink? Can you watch the ball game without a can of beer? Replace these drinks with nutritious food and snacks that your dietitian recommends, including liquid nutritional products.

If you are on a sodium-restricted and/or fluid-restricted diet, ask your dietitian to help you plan what to drink and eat. Remember that some foods are full of liquid. For example, a cup of gelatin dessert has almost as much water as a cup of juice.

- **Will a change in diet cure my respiratory disease?** No, changing your diet will not cure COPD. But think of a dietary change as something you can do for yourself to make your breathing easier and your life more enjoyable. A diet with the amount of calories your body needs will give you energy to do the things you want to do. The right mix of protein, carbohydrate, and fat in your diet will help your body breathe. The proper diet, along with the physical activity your doctor recommends, will keep your arm and leg muscles strong and your heart and lungs well supplied with oxygen. This will help you enjoy life despite COPD.

- **Will a different diet prevent me from getting so sick that I have to go to the hospital?** A good diet is not a magic blanket that protects you from every illness. No matter how well people eat, they still get sick occasionally. However, a well-nourished person is able to bounce back from illnesses more quickly than a person who is running on empty. A little snuffle may go no further than a 5-day cold in a well-fed person but can become a major bout of illness—pneumonia, for example—in a malnourished person.

You may find yourself in the hospital periodically. You may need help from machines to breathe. Patients who are well nourished tend to get off those machines faster.

Thus, a change in diet will not necessarily keep you out of the hospital. But it might make those hospital visits less frequent because you can fight infections better. And it might help you come home sooner from the hospital.

APPENDIX 11: FOOD SAFETY FOR IMMUNOCOMPROMISED PATIENTS

Choose Foods Wisely

- Avoid packages that are torn or leaking. Choose unbruised produce. Wash produce well before eating.
- Check expiration date prior to eating and discard if past date.
- Place raw meat/poultry/fish in plastic bags to prevent meat juices from contacting other foods in grocery cart and refrigerator.
- Purchase foods only from reputable dealers.
- Place frozen and refrigerated items in grocery cart last.
- Avoid eating any raw meat or fish items, such as sushi, or undercooked meats.
- Milk and milk products should be pasteurized; avoid soft cheeses that are not pasteurized, including feta, Brie, Camembert, and blue cheese.
- Avoid self-select bulk foods.

Store Foods Safely

- Maintain adequate storage temperatures; keep refrigerator at 40°F (4°C), freezer at 0°F (-17°C).
- Cook or freeze fresh poultry, fish, and ground meats within 2 days, other beef, veal, lamb, or pork within 3-5 days.
- Hold hot foods at $\geq 140^{\circ}\text{F}$ (60°C).
- Hold cold foods at $\leq 40^{\circ}\text{F}$ (4°C).
- Never leave perishable foods out for more than a total of 2 hours (1 hour for temperatures above 90°).

Thaw Food Safely

- Refrigerator: Allows slow and safe thawing. Make sure thawing juices do not drip on other foods.
- Cold water: For faster thawing, place food in leakproof plastic bag and submerge in cold tap water.
- Microwave: Cook meat and poultry immediately after microwave thawing.

Cook and Eat Foods Safely

- Cook all meats to the following minimum internal temperatures:
 - Poultry: 180°F (82°C) for whole birds, 170°F (77°C) for poultry parts, 165°F (74°C) for ground poultry
 - Ground beef, veal, lamb, pork: 160°F (74°C)
 - Steaks and roasts: 145°F (63°C)
 - Pork and ham: 160°F (74°C)
 - Seafood: 145°F (63°C)
- Juices from all meats should run clear. No pink flesh should be visible on cooked meat.
- Maintain proper hygiene when working with food. Wash hands, utensils, bowls, or cutting boards that come in contact with raw meat, fish, or eggs.
- Reheat leftovers to uniform temperature of 165°F (74°C).
- Do not use cracked eggs or eat dishes containing raw or partially cooked eggs, such as fresh Caesar salad, homemade ice cream, chocolate mousse, custard, or poached eggs. Use pasteurized egg products for recipes in which eggs are not cooked thoroughly.
- Do not eat cooked meats that have been in contact with raw meat or juices.
- Be aware of safety of drinking water. Contact local health and environment officials for information on safety of water. Well water should be tested for parasites. If in doubt, boil water for 5 minutes.

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