



Patient & Family Guide
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Soft, Easy to Chew, High Energy, High Protein Nutrition Guidelines



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Soft, Easy to Chew, High Energy, High Protein Nutrition Guidelines

Good nutrition is more important after your surgery or illness. Choosing high energy, high protein foods will help you get the nutrition you need to increase energy levels, gain or maintain weight, heal, fight or resist infections, and recover more quickly from surgery or illness.

This booklet gives ideas for high energy, high protein foods that are soft and easy to chew.

Tips for your diet

- Make every bite count by choosing foods that are high in energy and protein. For example, choose cream soup over broth or canned fruit in syrup over watermelon.
- Eat small meals and snacks often. Try to snack every 2 hours.
- Always have snack foods available so you can eat when you feel hungry.
- If your appetite changes during the day, try to eat your biggest meal when food is most appealing.
- Keep frozen, canned, or ready-to-use foods on hand for you when you don't feel like cooking.

- Let family and friends help you. They can shop for groceries or cook meals.
- Cook larger batches of food when you feel better. Then you can freeze leftovers for times when you don't feel like cooking.
- Make meals more attractive by using brightly-coloured foods and garnishes.
- Use drinks to add extra calories: choose milk, smoothies, juice, or milkshakes over water, tea, coffee, or diet sodas.
- Include a serving of protein at each meal and snack.
- Improve your appetite by going for a short walk and enjoying fresh air and activity.
- Add extra sauces, gravies, cream, or fats to your food.
- Eat with friends and family to make mealtimes enjoyable.
- If you are not eating solid food, aim for 8 cups of high energy, high protein liquids each day. Try whole milk, milkshakes, smoothies, or nutritional supplement drinks.

If you have any questions, please ask.
We are here to help you.

Tips if you have a sore mouth or throat

- Change the texture of foods to make them easier to chew and swallow. You can chop, mince, mash, or purée with a blender or food processor. For easy clean up when puréeing food, try an immersion blender.
- Start with ground meats to make sure meat is soft. Try meatloaf, shepherd's pie, tortiere, etc.
- Avoid rough, dry foods that can scratch and irritate your mouth or throat.
- Avoid very hot or very cold foods.
- Take your time eating.
- Drink through a straw to avoid irritating a sore mouth; unless it makes you cough or clear your throat.
- Use extra sauces and gravies to moisten foods.
- Dip breads in sauces or gravies and use butter or margarine liberally.
- Soak cold cereals in milk until they are soft.
- Dip cookies and cakes in milk or hot drinks to soften them. Try them with ice-cream, frozen yogurt, soft fruit, pudding, or yogurt to add moisture.
- Alternate food and liquid to help you swallow and keep your mouth moist.
- Avoid acidic and spicy food that can irritate your mouth or throat.

You may notice the taste of food has changed.

Tips to help food taste better

- Rinse your mouth out before and after meals to help clear your taste buds.
- Try a candy, mint, or chewing gum to help eliminate bad tastes.
- Cold food has less taste and smell. If you find smells bother you, try cold foods. To strengthen tastes, try hot foods.
- To improve taste, try smelling each bite for a few seconds before eating.
- To increase the flavour of foods, try a sour food (e.g. sherbet or lemon soda) before meals if not uncomfortable.
- Try drinking liquids with meals to mask unpleasant tastes.
- Get rid of cooking smells by using an exhaust fan or cook on an outdoor grill.
- Keep a clean and healthy mouth by brushing and flossing regularly.
- Avoid foods with unpleasant tastes. Focus on foods you are able to eat. Try the foods that seemed unpleasant again in 2 weeks to see if the flavours have gotten better.
- Try new foods - you might find something that tastes good!

If food tastes:	Try:
Salty	<p>Adding sweet flavours, such as cinnamon, fruit, or sugar.</p> <p>Low-salt or low-sodium products.</p>
Sweet	<p>A pinch of salt in puddings, ice-cream, yogurts, and canned fruits.</p> <p>Nutritional supplements with a coffee flavour.</p> <p>Buttermilk in smoothie recipes.</p> <p>Adding acidity by using lemon, lime, and vinegar as long as your mouth is not sore.</p>
Bland	<p>Alternating bites of different-tasting foods during a meal.</p> <p>Adding more salt, herbs, and spices, as long as your mouth is not sore.</p> <p>Strong-flavoured foods like spaghetti, BBQ sauce, chocolate, pickles, and marinated meats.</p>
Metallic or bitter	<p>Using glass pots and plastic utensils.</p> <p>Fresh or frozen food instead of canned.</p> <p>Marinating meats with fruit juices, vinegar, wine, or soy sauce.</p> <p>Using lemon candies, mints, or gum after a meal as long as your mouth is not sore.</p> <p>Eating meat, fish, or poultry at room temperature or cold.</p> <p>Red meats can taste more metallic than fish and chicken.</p>

Tips if your mouth is very dry or you have thick saliva

- Avoid dry, sticky foods such as crackers, peanut butter, dry mashed potatoes, or thick fudge and syrups.
- Follow each mouthful of food with a sip of liquid.
- Moisten food with higher-fat foods like gravies, margarine, butter, cream, and sauces.
- Limit caffeine and alcohol.
- Try to drink 8 cups of non-caffeinated fluids daily.
- Slightly tart or carbonated drinks can help thin saliva.
- If nutritional supplements are too thick or creamy, try Boost Fruit Beverage® or add milk, water, or ice to thin.

When your mouth is dry, infections and cavities are more likely. Follow these guidelines to help keep your mouth clean.

Brush your teeth after every meal and before going to bed using a soft toothbrush rinsed in warm water.

Rinse your mouth out after brushing your teeth. Do not use mouthwash with alcohol as it leads to dry mouth.

For a sore mouth or throat, rinse/gargle 6-8 times a day with:

- 1/2 tsp baking soda and 1/2 tsp salt dissolved in 2 cups of water

Protein

Your body uses protein to build and repair cells. Your body also uses protein to heal, build muscle, and fight infections. The main food sources of protein include: meat, poultry, fish, eggs, dairy products, legumes, and soy. Eating protein from a wide variety of food sources will also help you meet your nutrient requirements for iron, zinc, vitamin B12, calcium, and vitamin D.

Listed below are good food sources of protein:

Food	Serving size	Grams of protein
Meat, fish, poultry	75g/125ml (1/2 cup)	21g
Firm tofu	150g/175ml (3/4 cup)	12g
Egg	1 large	6g
Cheese	50g (1½ oz)	12g
Cottage cheese	125ml (1/2 cup)	13g

Food	Serving size	Grams of protein
Fortified soy beverage	250ml (1 cup)	7-8g
Dried beans, peas, lentils (cooked)	175ml (3/4 cup)	12g
Milk (cow's)	250ml (1 cup)	9g
Yogurt	175ml (3/4 cup)	7g
Greek yogurt	175ml (3/4 cup)	14g
Peanut (or other nut) butters	30ml (2 Tbsp)	4g
Nuts, seeds	60ml (1/4 cup)	3-8g
Bread	1 slice	4g
Cereal (cold)	30g	3g
Cereal (hot)	175ml (3/4 cup)	4g
Pasta, rice (cooked)	125ml (1/2 cup)	3g
Quinoa (cooked)	125ml (1/2 cup)	4g
Vegetables	125ml (1/2 cup) or 250ml (1 cup) of lettuce	2g
Fruit	1 fruit or 125ml (1/2 cup)	1g

Talk to your dietitian to find out how many grams of protein you should aim for in a day.

Try these ideas to help get the protein you need:

Food	How to use
<p>Skim milk powder</p> <p>1 Tbsp has 33 calories and 3g protein</p>	<p>Add to cold foods such as milkshakes, yogurt, puddings, custard, and smoothies.</p> <p>Add to hot foods such as mashed potatoes, cooked cereals, cream soups and sauces, hot chocolate, and casseroles.</p> <p>Add to baked goods such as pancakes, muffins, biscuits, etc.</p> <p>Make ‘double milk’ by adding ½ cup to 1 cup of homogenized milk.</p>
<p>Cheese</p>	<p>Grate or cut up in casseroles and salads.</p> <p>Use soft cheeses like goat cheese, chevre, brie, etc.</p> <p>Melt on top of potatoes, eggs, pasta, cooked vegetables, and stews.</p> <p>Eat with soft crackers, muffins, fruit, and breads.</p> <p>Melt in sauces, dips, and soups.</p>
<p>Eggs</p>	<p>Add chopped or sliced into potato or tossed salads, sandwich fillings, and casseroles.</p> <p>Use extra eggs when baking and cooking.</p> <p>Beat into soups.</p>

Food	How to use
Peanut (or other nut) butters	<p>Add to muffin, cookie, pancake, and waffle mixes.</p> <p>Spread on crackers, bread, fruit, and vegetables.</p> <p>Stir into hot cereal, ice-cream, yogurt, and milkshakes.</p>
Nuts, seeds	<p>Sprinkle ground nuts and seeds on ice-cream, yogurt, puddings, cereals, and stews.</p> <p>Mix with dried fruit for a trail mix.</p> <p>Add ground nuts to muffin and cookie mixes.</p>
Beans, lentils	<p>Add to casseroles, soups, stews, salads, chili, dips, and spreads.</p> <p>Spread hummus on soft bread or use as a dip.</p>
Meat, fish, poultry	<p>Add to casseroles, soups, pasta, salads, omelettes, quiche, and rice.</p> <p>Use ground meat to cut down on chewing.</p> <p>Spread paté on bread and crackers.</p>
Tofu	<p>Mix silken-style tofu into smoothies, sauces, soups, and chowders.</p> <p>Add to casseroles, soups, and stews.</p>
Wheat germ	<p>Sprinkle onto yogurt and cereal.</p> <p>Add to muffin, cookie, pancake, and other mixes.</p>

Energy

Energy, also commonly referred to as calories, comes from carbohydrates, fat, and protein in food. You can increase your energy intake by choosing calorie-dense foods, eating more often, or eating larger portions.

Try these ideas to add more energy (calories):

Food	How to use
Fruit and vegetables	<p>On soft, cooked vegetables, add a cream sauce, cheese, margarine, butter, and/or oil.</p> <p>Use avocado in sandwiches and dips.</p> <p>Make fruit into crisps or cobblers and top with ice-cream or whipping cream.</p> <p>Choose fruit packed in syrup.</p> <p>Add butter, margarine, heavy cream, or plain yogurt to mashed potatoes.</p>

Food	How to use
Grain products	<p>Spread butter or margarine on soft bread and muffins.</p> <p>Use homogenized milk or Greek yogurt on cereal.</p> <p>Add honey, brown sugar, or peanut butter to hot cereal.</p> <p>Add breadcrumbs, oatmeal, or wheat germ to baking mixes, meatloaf, or hamburgers.</p> <p>Use jams, jellies, honey, brown sugar, or syrup on cereals, pancakes, French toast, and waffles.</p>
Meat and alternatives	<p>Add gravies, sauces, or glazes to meat, poultry, and fish.</p> <p>Mix mayonnaise with chopped chicken or fish to make sandwich filling.</p> <p>Spread nut butters on soft breads.</p> <p>Spread hummus on breads or use as a dip.</p> <p>Use pesto sauce on fish or chicken.</p> <p>Add ground nuts and seeds to yogurt, puddings, ice-cream, baked goods, and cereals.</p> <p>Choose high calorie options, such as fatty fish, or chicken legs or thighs.</p> <p>Add an extra egg to baking mixes.</p>

Food	How to use
Milk and alternatives	<p>Add powdered milk to: homogenized milk, yogurt, mashed potatoes, puddings, custard, sauces, gravies, smoothies, milkshakes, soups, batters, cereals, and hot chocolate.</p> <p>Choose yogurt and cheese made with a high percentage of fat.</p> <p>Add whipping cream to fruit, puddings, ice-cream, pies, Jell-O®, pancakes, waffles, French toast, and hot chocolate.</p> <p>Use cream or half-and-half instead of milk in recipes.</p> <p>Add sweetened condensed milk to puddings and milkshakes.</p>

Nutritional supplements

You may want to use nutritional supplements as an extra source of energy and protein. These can be useful when you are not able to eat a full meal or are having trouble meeting your nutritional requirements through food alone. They can also be used if you are having trouble chewing and need a liquid diet. These drinks can meet all your nutritional needs if you drink the right amount.

Most drugstores and grocery stores carry nutritional supplement drinks, often in brand names (e.g. Boost[®], Ensure[®]), and may also carry store brands (e.g. Equate[®], President's Choice[®]). Read the labels to find out which supplement is best for you. You can also buy protein and glucose powders (e.g. Beneprotein[®] or Polycose[®]) which can be mixed easily with most foods and liquids.

High energy, high protein recipes

Chocolate Banana Peanut Butter Smoothie

- 1 cup Greek yogurt
- 1 cup ice cream (vanilla)
- 2 Tbsp peanut butter
- 2 Tbsp chocolate syrup
- 1 frozen banana

Mix all ingredients together in a blender. Enjoy cold. Keep leftovers in the fridge or freezer.

Piña Colada Smoothie

- 1 cup pineapple nectar
- 1 cup whole milk (can use nutritional supplement instead)
- 1 frozen banana
- 1/4 cup frozen strawberries
- 2 Tbsp skim milk powder

Mix all ingredients together in a blender. Enjoy cold. Keep leftovers in the fridge or freezer.

High Protein Eggnog

- 1/2 cup eggnog
- 1 Tbsp skim milk powder
- 1/4 cup whole milk
- cinnamon and nutmeg (to taste)

Mix all ingredients together in a blender. Add a tiny sprinkle of cinnamon or nutmeg on top, as desired. Serve cold.

Orange Pro Frost

- 1/2 cup orange juice
- 1/2 cup ice cream or sherbet
- 2 Tbsp skim milk powder

Mix all ingredients together in a blender. Enjoy cold. Keep leftovers in the fridge or freezer.

Yogurt Smoothie

- 1 cup fruit (try bananas or canned peaches)
- 1/3 cup Greek, plain, or fruit yogurt
- 1 Tbsp honey
- 1 cup whole milk (can add an extra 2 Tbsp skim milk powder)
- 2 ice cubes

Mix all ingredients together in a blender. Enjoy cold. Keep leftovers in the fridge or freezer.

Tofu Shake

- 1 cup soy milk
- 1/3 cup soft tofu
- 1 tsp vanilla extract
- 1 cup soft fruit (try bananas or canned peaches)

Mix all ingredients together in a blender. Enjoy cold. Keep leftovers in the fridge or freezer.

Super Pudding

- 1 package (4 1/2 oz) instant pudding mix
- 2 cups homogenized milk
- 2 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 3/4 cup skim milk powder

Combine all ingredients. Mix well and refrigerate until set. Enjoy with whipped cream.

Macaroni and Cheese

- 3 cups cooked pasta (drained)
- 1/4 cup butter or margarine
- 1 Tbsp flour
- 2 egg yolks (slightly beaten)
- 1 cup grated cheese
- 1/4 cup evaporated milk
- 3/4 cup whole milk
- 1/4 tsp salt
- pepper (to taste)
- 6 crackers (can also use 1/2 cup breadcrumbs)

Set oven to 400 degrees F. Melt butter in a large pan. Stir in flour, egg yolks, salt, and pepper. Add milk, stirring often on low heat until sauce starts to thicken. Add grated cheese. Mix together sauce and cooked macaroni, then place in a greased baking dish. Top with crackers and more grated cheese. Bake until bubbling.

Sweet Potato Burritos

- 1 Tbsp vegetable oil
- 1 onion (chopped)
- 4 cloves garlic (minced)
- 6 cups kidney beans (rinsed and drained)
- 2 cups water
- 3 Tbsp chili powder
- 4 tsp mustard
- 2 tsp cumin (ground)
- cayenne pepper (to taste)
- 3 Tbsp soy sauce
- 4 cups sweet potato (cooked and mashed)
- 12 flour tortillas
- 1 cup shredded cheese

Preheat oven to 350 degrees F. Heat oil in a frying pan and sauté onion and garlic until soft. Mash beans into the onion mixture. Gradually stir in water, heating until warm. Remove from heat, then stir in soy sauce, chili powder, mustard, cumin, and cayenne.

In each tortilla add an equal amount of bean mixture and mashed sweet potatoes. Roll up tortillas and place on a baking sheet. Cover with cheese. Bake for 12 minutes.

High energy, high protein sample menu

Breakfast

2-egg omelette with cheddar cheese and soft cooked onions and peppers

1 banana

1 cup of latte (drink made with espresso and steamed whole milk)

Mid-morning snack

3/4 cup Greek yogurt with 1/2 cup fresh berries, drizzled with honey

Lunch

1/2 cup diced chicken mixed with 2 Tbsp mayonnaise on soft bread or a croissant

1 cup split pea soup drizzled with olive oil

Mid-afternoon snack

1 cup Chocolate Banana Peanut Butter Smoothie (see recipe above)

Supper

75g salmon with basil pesto (size of a deck of cards)

1/2 cup mashed potatoes made with whipping cream and butter

1/2 cup soft steamed broccoli with melted cheese on top

Evening snack

1 slice cheesecake with whipped cream and chocolate syrup

Notes:

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For more information go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

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If you have any questions, please ask your healthcare provider.

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The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.