

# A Patient Resource: Eating Well for Wound Healing

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*Nourishing your body with good food that you enjoy can help keep your skin healthy, heal your wound and prevent infection. When your body has a wound, you need more calories, protein, fluid and certain vitamins and minerals, such as vitamin C, vitamin A, zinc and iron.*

*Eat often through each day. Try to have 3 meals and several snacks every day. If you have a poor appetite, eat smaller meals more often and try to eat when your appetite is the best. 🍴*



### Calories (Energy)

Wounds are hungry. Calories provide the energy needed to heal. Foods that contain carbohydrates and fat will give you energy to heal. At meals, eat fresh or frozen fruit, whole grain breads and pasta, rice and starchy vegetables (potatoes, yams and corn) and higher fat foods such as avocados, olives and vegetable oils, nut and seed butters and full-fat dairy products. Your body needs enough energy to use the protein in food to protect your skin and heal your wound.



### Protein

Protein is needed to help you maintain your muscles and supply the ingredients to build new tissue to heal your wound. Protein is also needed for your immune system to help fight infection. Include a protein-rich food at each meal and snack. Protein foods can also be a good source of minerals such as iron and zinc that are needed in wound healing. Foods rich in protein include:

- Eggs
- Meat, fish, poultry
- Nuts, seeds
- Cheese, cottage cheese, Greek- or Icelandic-style (SKYR) yogurt
- Beans, lentils, tofu
- Protein powders (whey, soy, collagen, pea, hemp or skim milk powder)



### Fluid

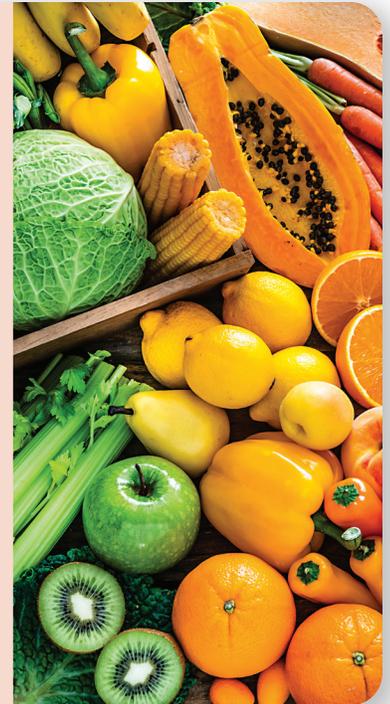
Wounds are thirsty. Fluid helps deliver valuable nutrition to the wound. Try to drink at least 6–8 cups (1.5–2 L) of fluid every day. Stay hydrated by drinking a variety of hot or cold beverages such as 100% fruit or vegetable juice, milk or fortified milk alternatives, shakes, broth, tea, coffee and water. If your appetite is poor, have fluids at the end of a meal.



## Vitamins and Minerals

Vitamins and minerals are needed to heal your wound and improve your immune system. Eating a variety of foods should give you all the vitamins and minerals you need. Foods rich in vitamin A, vitamin C, zinc and iron are especially important in your diet at this time. Here's a list of some good sources of essential wound-healing nutrients:

- Vitamin A: milk, cheese, eggs, green leafy vegetables, orange fruits and vegetables (apricots, mango, cantaloupe, pumpkin, sweet potatoes)
- Vitamin C: oranges, tomatoes, strawberries, bell peppers, leafy vegetables
- Zinc: meat, poultry, liver, fish and shellfish, milk products, poultry, eggs, beans and lentils
- Iron: liver, shellfish, red meat, beans and lentils, pumpkin seeds, enriched grain products



## Blood Glucose

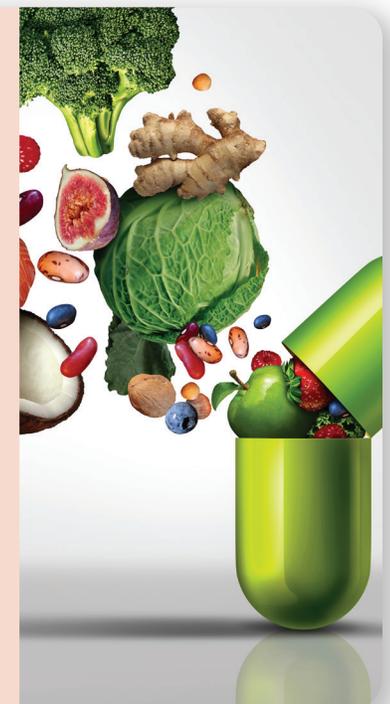
If you live with diabetes, managing blood glucose levels can be challenging when you have a wound. Talk to your diabetes educator or doctor if you need support. Blood glucose levels that are well managed help the wound heal and can prevent new wounds.



## Supplements

Nutritional supplements come in many forms, from liquid meal replacement drinks and protein powders to vitamin-mineral pills. If you have not been able to eat enough food and your appetite is poor, you may wish to have a supplement along with your food to help you get the nutrition you need to heal.

- A multivitamin-mineral supplement can be helpful. Choose a general supplement. Talk to your pharmacist if you need help.
- A protein powder (whey, soy, collagen, pea or hemp) can easily be added to your hot cereal, soups or hot and cold drinks. (Mix the powder with a little liquid to make a paste before you add it to foods).
- If you are missing meals or cannot eat enough, a liquid meal replacement drink can give you the extra nutrition you need to heal. Choose a supplement with extra protein and/or extra calories. Some nutrition drinks are made especially for people living with diabetes.



## What's on the menu?

Each day, have 3 meals *plus* 3 snacks made up of foods that nourish your body and you enjoy. You can keep track here:

<b>6 servings of fluids</b>	1 serving = 250 ml (1 cup) water, juice, tea	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4–6 servings of protein</b>	1 serving = 2 eggs OR 90 g (3 oz) fish, chicken or meat OR 125 ml (½ cup) cottage cheese OR 30 ml (2 Tbsp) nut butter OR 60 ml (¼ cup) nuts OR 45 ml (3 Tbsp) cheese OR 175 ml (¾ cup) beans	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>6 servings of grains</b>	1 serving = 1 slice whole grain bread OR 175 ml (¾ cup) hot cereal OR 125 ml (½ cup) rice or quinoa OR 125 ml (½ cup) pasta	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3 servings of milk products</b>	1 serving = 175 ml (¾ cup) yogurt OR 250 ml (1 cup) milk or soy milk	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>2 servings of fruit</b>	1 serving = 1 small fruit OR 125 ml (½ cup) pureed OR 60 ml (¼ cup) dried	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>3 servings of vegetables</b>	1 serving = 250 ml (1 cup) raw OR 125 ml (½ cup) cooked	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>4 servings of healthy fats</b>	1 serving = 15 ml (1 tsp) olive oil, margarine/butter OR 1/6 <sup>th</sup> avocado	<input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/> <input type="checkbox"/>

### Notes:

- Your dietitian may suggest different amounts that are right for you.
- Please talk to your dietitian about your individual nutrition needs if you live with kidney or liver disease or diabetes.
- Contact your dietitian if you are having trouble eating this amount of food, or if you need more information on meal and snack ideas.

## Top Tips for Getting the Nutrition You Need

- ☑ Use full-fat dairy products such as yogurt, milk or cheese.
- ☑ Mix honey, jam, syrups or molasses into yogurt or hot cereals.
- ☑ Add lentils or beans to soups.
- ☑ Cook hot cereals with milk or soy milk.
- ☑ Add olive oil to smoothies, pasta or cooked vegetables.
- ☑ Snack on nuts and seeds. Add nut butters to crackers or fruit or melt it into hot cereal.
- ☑ Blend cottage cheese or Greek yogurt into a smoothie.
- ☑ Add skim milk powder to a glass of milk or mix into mashed potatoes, soups or puddings.
- ☑ Grate cheese onto vegetables.
- ☑ Add canned fish to salads or pasta.
- ☑ Include sliced avocados or hummus in sandwiches.
- ☑ Sprinkle raisins or dried cranberries onto cereals, salads or yogurt.



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