

Wound care and pressure ulcers – a guide to a nourishing diet

Nutrition and Dietetics

Patient Information Leaflet

To be used in conjunction with one of these related leaflets:

- **Pressure ulcers – a guide for patients and carers or**
- **Wound care – a guide for patients and carers**

Introduction

If you have a wound or pressure ulcer, it is important that you have a balanced diet to help your skin heal well and to reduce the risk of developing further pressure ulcers. This leaflet contains information on what to eat and drink to help your skin heal.

Which types of food and drink will help my skin heal?

Some nutrients are particularly important in helping your skin to heal:

Nutrient	Good sources
Protein	Meat, fish, eggs, beans, pulses, nuts, seeds and dairy products (milk, cheese, yoghurt).
Iron	Meat, fish and alternatives – meat (especially beef and offal), fish, eggs, beans, lentils and nuts. Vegetables – dark green leafy vegetables (broccoli, spring greens, spinach, kale), okra, karela (bitter gourd) and leeks. Fruit – dried fruit (prunes, figs, apricots). Other – fortified breakfast cereals, yeast extract.
Zinc	Meat, fish and alternatives – meat (especially beef, lamb, offal), crab, shellfish, dairy products, eggs and nuts. Vegetables – leafy green vegetables and root vegetables (such as carrots, onions and radishes). Other – wholemeal bread and fortified breakfast cereals.

Vitamin C

Vegetables – red and green bell peppers and chilli peppers, broccoli, brussel sprouts, mangetout, peas, cabbage, spring greens, cauliflower, kale, watercress, karela (bitter gourd). Potatoes, plantain and sweet potato are moderately high in vitamin C and can be a good source, if you eat them regularly or in quite large amounts.

Fruit – oranges, strawberries, blackcurrants, kiwi fruit, mango and guava.

Drinks and juices – drink a small glass of orange juice every day. Alternatively, choose certain brands of drinks that are naturally high or fortified with vitamin C (e.g. Ribena, Ocean Spray Cranberry Classic Juice Drink (not the light version), Horlicks, Ovaltine, Nesquik, Vimto – check the labels of other brands/varieties as content varies).

General tips if you have a wound or pressure ulcer

- Aim to drink at least six to eight cups (1,500 to 2,000ml) of fluid every day. Ideally one pint (approximately 600ml) of this should be milk or fortified milk. It is also important to drink plenty as this helps to prevent your skin from becoming dry and fragile. Being well hydrated will mean your skin is able to heal well and is less likely to be damaged.
- Consider taking a daily multivitamin and mineral supplement – you can buy these from a supermarket, pharmacy or health food shop.
- Try to serve meals with vegetables and/or salad, especially those mentioned in the table of good sources.

Meal ideas

Breakfast

- Bowl of cereal or porridge with milk or fortified milk.
- Toast, crumpets or muffins with peanut butter or egg (poached, boiled, scrambled or fried).
- Bacon, sausage and/or egg sandwich or cooked breakfast.

Light and main meals

- Sandwiches with meat, corned beef, chicken, tuna, salmon, egg or cheese with salad and tomatoes.
- Omelette with extra cheese or ham with red peppers, tomatoes or baked beans.
- Toast with cheese, baked beans, egg, pilchards, sardines, bacon or sausage.

- Macaroni cheese, cauliflower cheese – try adding extra grated cheese.
- Jacket potato with butter and cheese and beans, cheese or tuna mayonnaise.
- Corned beef hash, cheese and potato pie, quiche, cottage pie, lasagne, fish pie, beef chilli with red kidney beans.
- Meat, chicken, fish or vegetarian alternative with cheese sauce and potatoes.
- Curries, stews or soups containing meat, fish, pulses or nuts and vegetables. If you prefer to have vegetables or salad separately, consider serving these alongside the main dish.

Puddings

- Trifle
- Yoghurt
- Rice or other milk-based pudding, kheer
- Custard
- Milk jelly
- Fromage frais
- Egg custard
- Sponge pudding and custard
- Fruit crumble and custard

Nourishing drinks and snacks

- Milky drinks such as coffee, chai tea, malted drinks or hot chocolate.
- Milkshake, lassi (traditional Asian yoghurt-based drink).
- A small piece of cheese with or without buttered crackers or cheese biscuits.

- Nuts (plain, salted, roasted or nut butter e.g. peanut butter on toast).
- Dried fruit e.g. apricots, prunes, figs.

What if I have a small appetite?

Suggestions for enriching drinks and snacks to add more protein

As well as following the meal ideas in this leaflet, there are ways of increasing your protein intake without you having to increase the amount of food that you eat:

- Fortified milk can be made by adding four heaped tablespoons (about 50g) of dried skimmed milk powder to one pint of milk. This can be used in drinks, on cereal, in custard and rice pudding, and in cheese sauce.
- Add grated cheese to mashed potato, soups, omelettes, scrambled eggs, baked beans or tinned spaghetti.

Suggestions for adding extra calories if you need to gain weight

It is also important to ensure that you get plenty of calories (energy) from your diet by including food and drinks that are high in calories:

- Choose:
 - Whole milk rather than skimmed or semi-skimmed – all types of milk contain the same amount of protein.
 - Homemade high calorie milkshakes can be made as follows:
 - 60ml double cream (four tablespoons)
 - 180ml whole milk (six tablespoons)
 - Two small scoops of ice cream
 - Six level tablespoons of skimmed milk powder

Makes two milkshakes providing 350 kcals/14g protein each.

- Full fat versions of other dairy products such as yoghurts and cheese.
- Use plenty of butter or full fat margarine on bread, toast and crackers.
- Be generous with oil, butter or ghee when cooking.

General tips if you have a small appetite

- Have drinks after meals, rather than before or with meals.
- Eat every two to three hours. Aim to have three small meals plus two to three nourishing snacks in between.

What about supplement drinks?

If you have been prescribed supplement drinks, try to drink them as advised – they will really help your wound to heal.

Alternatively, if you are not eating well, you can purchase ‘over the counter’ supplement drinks such as Complian, AYMES and Meritene. These are available from pharmacies and some supermarkets. They should be taken once or twice daily in between meals and **not** as a meal replacement.

What if I am still concerned?

If you are following this advice but are still concerned about your wound or pressure ulcer, or you are losing weight, please speak to your GP, district nurse or dietitian (if you are seeing one).

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

The dietitians at Russells Hall Hospital on 01384 244017 (8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday)

The community dietitians at Stourbridge Health and Social Care Centre on 01384 323749 (8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday)

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number:
01384 456111

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dgft.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/tissue-viability-community/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email dgft.patient.information@nhs.uk

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

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Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

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Aceasta brosură poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru vă rugăm să sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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