

## 1. Choose From the Four Food Groups

Eat the recommended servings of each food group to help you fight infection and maintain strength. Canada's Food Guide recommends:

- milk and milk products 2-4 servings (if on Prednisone, try for 4 servings)
- bread and cereals 5 servings minimum
- fruit and vegetables 5 servings minimum
- meat and alternatives 2-3 servings

## 2. To Help Manage Shortness of Breath When Eating

Eat smaller, frequent meals (5-6 meals/snacks/day). Too much food at one time is overwhelming; frequent, smaller meals help improve a poor appetite.

Try softer, easy-to-chew foods to reduce the effort of eating.

Rest before meals. Eat slowly, in a relaxed place.

Sip fluids, do not gulp air and avoid foods that "give you gas". Excess gas can make you feel full.

Take your bronchodilator inhaler before meals. This is to help you breathe easier at meals so you can eat better.

## 3. Fluids

Try to drink 6-8 cups of fluids such as water, fruit juices or milk each day. Adequate fluids help thin mucous secretions.

Milk and dairy products do not produce more mucous but can coat mucous already present and make it more noticeable. Try drinking citrus juice after taking dairy products to help the mucous.

Limit fluid taken with meals so you don't feel too full to eat. Have most liquids after or between meals.

## 4. Tips to Save Time and Energy

- Make "easy to prepare" one dish meals; make extra and freeze some for later.
- Use the oven, microwave, or toaster oven if you find stove-top cooking tiring.
- Try ready-to-serve meals available in the deli or frozen sections of your grocery store.
- Try services such as Meals on Wheels, Chef on the Run, and Cooks Day Off which provide pre-prepared meals.
- Plan and prepare ahead of time as much as possible.

## 5. Salt

If you have swollen ankles or high blood pressure ask your doctor if you should limit salt.

## 6. If You Are Underweight

Being underweight increases your risk for illness.

- Eat small meals 5-6 times per day.
- Include protein foods at all meals. Protein foods are: milk, cheese, yogurt, eggs, meat, poultry, fish, nut butters, legumes, soy products.
- Include high fat foods such as: soft margarine, vegetable oils, butter, nuts, cream, ice cream, sour cream, whole milk, mayonnaise, salad dressing, gravies, nut butters, cream cheese.
- Drink liquids with calories like: milk, milkshakes, juice, Ensure®, Boost®. Drink them after eating your meal so you're not too full to eat.
- Eat your main meal before you get too tired.
- Weigh yourself once a week so you know if you are still losing weight.

## 7. If You Are Overweight

Being overweight makes breathing more difficult. To lose weight, change your eating and exercise habits gradually. Try to:

- Reduce portion sizes; continue to have 2-3 servings of protein per day.
- Limit high fat and high sugar foods; eat more fruits and vegetables instead.
- If your doctor allows, increase your activity.
- Don't keep the 'treats' at home that you can't resist eating.
- Weigh yourself once a week so you can track if you are slowly losing weight.

**If your weight continues to be a concern, ask your doctor to refer you to an outpatient dietitian at Victoria General Hospital or Royal Jubilee Hospital.**