



## Nutrition

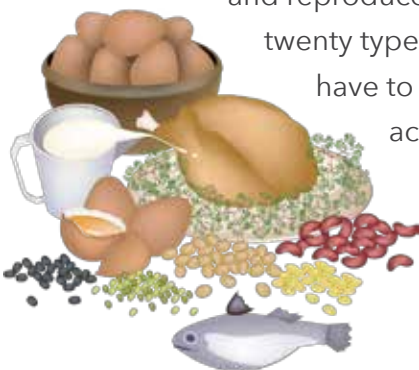
Nutrition is the foundation of wound healing. Eating a well-balanced, nutritious diet ensures you get the nutrients you need. Nutrients give you energy and help you burn other nutrients to provide more energy.

When you think of nutrition it is easy to think of weight management. Staying lean and healthy is an important part of nutrition but that's not the only reason to focus on food. Another important part of nutrition is that it helps build and repair tissue. This is why nutrition is the foundation in the healing process of your wound.

There are six types of nutrients: proteins, carbohydrates, dietary fats, vitamins, minerals and water. Let's take a look at each one.

### PROTEINS

Proteins are made up of amino acids. Amino acids help your muscles move and help cells talk and reproduce. There are over twenty types of amino acids. You have to get ten of the amino acids, called essential amino acids, through the foods you eat because



your body cannot create them. You get these 10 essential amino acids from eating protein. According to the Centers For Disease Control (CDC), it's best to get proteins from:

- Meats, poultry, fish
- Legumes (dry beans and peas)
- Tofu
- Eggs
- Nuts and seeds
- Low-fat Milk and low-fat milk products
- Grains, and certain fruits and vegetables

### CARBOHYDRATES

Carbohydrates give the body glucose, the fuel that gives you energy. When you eat carbohydrates, your body either uses the energy right away or stores it for later. The best carbohydrates are low in sugar and high in dietary fiber and whole grains. The CDC recommends eating the following carbohydrates:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Breads, cereals and other grains



When eating carbohydrates, try to avoid unhealthy options like soda, candy and processed foods. These foods tend to be high in calories and carbohydrates but low in nutrients.

## DIETARY FATS

Fats have a bad reputation. While there are bad fats, there are also good fats that the body needs. Good fats are called unsaturated fats. Bad fats are called saturated and trans fat. The CDC recommends eating the following dietary fats:

- Nuts
- Vegetable Oils (Canola oil, olive oil, sunflower oil, avocados, etc.)
- Fish

Fats should be an essential but limited part of your diet. Try to limit saturated fats to 10% or less of your diet and unsaturated fats between 20-35% of your total daily calories.

## VITAMINS

Vitamins come from plants or animals and are needed for proper nutrition. The body cannot

make vitamins and needs outside help. If you are not eating vitamins, the body cannot make them. When trying to heal a non-healing wound, the following vitamins are especially important:

- Vitamin C
- Vitamin A
- Vitamin E



## MINERALS

Just like vitamins, the body needs minerals and cannot make them by itself. While vitamins come from plants and animals, minerals come from the earth. Most minerals are absorbed from the soil into plants. When we eat fruits and vegetables, our bodies absorb the minerals. When trying to heal a non-healing wound, the following minerals are especially important:

- Zinc
- Manganese
- Iron

## WATER

Every cell and organ in your body needs water to work. Water is essential to wound healing and overall health and yet 75% of Americans do not get enough water. Water helps your joints, body temperature and keeps the bowels working. The National Institute of Health recommends drinking 64 oz. of water each day, which is equal to a half gallon of water.

Centers For Disease Control. (2012). Nutrition For Everyone. Retrieved September 2013 from <http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/everyone/basics/>

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