Healthy Eating & Neutropenic Diet

Natasha Jones
Specialist Dietitian – Haematology & Palliative Care
Healthy Eating

- Fruit and Vegetables
- Regular carbohydrates
- Low fat
- Low Sugar
- Limited alcohol
Alcohol

- Linked with increase of developing certain cancers – as little as 1 unit per day
- Sensible drinking guidelines:
  1. Men drink less than 3 units alcohol per day or 21 per week
  2. Women drink less than 2 units per day, or 14 per week

Alcohol - 1 unit
Half pint standard strength (3-4%) beer, lager or cider
A single measure (25ml) of spirits

A standard 175ml glass wine – 2 units
A large glass of wine – 3 units
Weight

- Maintain healthy weight
- Being overweight increases risk of many cancers
- Try to keep weight within normal range (normal BMI)

If aiming for weight loss – 1kg (2lbs) per week

- Only eat as much as you need
- Eat a balanced diet with lots of fruit and vegetables
- Eat less sugar and fat
- Be more physically active

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics
Background

- In Sept 2005 The BDA produced a professional consensus statement for the use of clean diets.
- This arose due to the inconsistencies of practice amongst trusts and a lack of published evidence.
- BDA Haematology Subgroup – currently update.
Neutropenia

- Following chemotherapy there is a risk of infection from bacteria or fungus in foods. This is due to:

1. The white blood cells that would usually fight food poisoning bacteria are at a low level (neutropenia)
2. The gut lining acts as a barrier between bacteria and the blood stream. Chemo and RT damage the gut lining making it easier
Neutropenia

- Neutropenia is defined as a neutrophil count below 1.0x10^9/L in patients undergoing conditioning pre transplant and below 0.5x10^9/L but increasing post transplant

- Limited evidence based on RCT therefore recommendation vary between institutes

- London Haematology Dietitians reviewed literature in conjunction with recent consensus – published by Leukaemia Research (EBMT, 2008)
Food Safety

- Shopping – avoid damaged/broken packaging, food from over packed fridges or freezers
- Check best before dates
- Storage – fridge & freezer temps, shelf positions
- Food preparation
- Cooking
- Eating out
Neutropenic Diet

- Foods to avoid:
  - Soft ripened cheese (Brie, Camembert, goats cheese)
  - Blue veined cheese
  - Raw or lightly cooked shellfish
  - Raw/undercooked meat, sushi, smoked items
  - Raw eggs or undercooked egg
  - Probiotic, live or bio products
  - Paté
  - All unpasteurised products
  - Raw unpeeled fruit or vegetables including salad
  - Uncooked herbs, spices and pepper
  - Non-drinking water, bottle mineral or spring water
Any questions?