

Diet and Aplastic Anaemia, MDS, Acute Myeloid Leukaemia

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Overview

- Why is good nutrition important?
- What is a balanced diet?
- The 5 food groups
- Drink plenty
- Common myths
- Side-effects of treatment
- Nutrition Support
- Neutropenic diet





Why is good nutrition important?

- Maintain the body's store of nutrients
- Maintain weight
- Maintain strength & energy
- Prevent or reverse nutritional deficiencies
- Maximize quality of life
- Helps the immune system to function more effectively
- Improves tolerance to cancer treatments & their related side-effects
- After cancer treatment, it helps reduce the risk of new cancers and other diseases

Healthy Eating Quiz

- If I want to maintain a healthy weight and follow a 'healthy balanced diet' which foods should I eat mostly and which foods do I need to limit?
- The number of portions of vegetables and fruits you should try and have each day is ?
- If consumed at all, limit alcoholic drinks to ___units per day for men and women.
- *Large doses* of multivitamins are recommended during and after cancer treatment. True or false??

What is a balanced diet?

- Made up of 5 food groups
- Eating the right amount of the right food
- Provides nutrients you need to protect your health during treatment
- Enjoying your diet whilst ensuring an adequate intake of calories, protein and micronutrients.



The eatwell plate

Use the eatwell plate to help you get the balance right. It shows how much of what you eat should come from each food group.



The 5 Food Groups

Fruit & Vegetables:

- Good source of vitamins, minerals, fibre and phytochemicals.
- Choose a variety of colours
- Choose from fresh, frozen, tinned, dried or juice
- Aim for at least 5 portions a day
- They should make up 1/3 of what we eat





The 5 Food Groups

Bread, Rice, Potatoes, Pasta and others:

- Good source of energy, fibre, calcium, iron and B vitamins
- Choose wholegrain varieties
- Include at least one starchy food with each main meal.
- They should also make up 1/3 of what we eat



The 5 Food Groups

Milk and Dairy Foods:

- Important source of calcium for bone health
- Good source of protein, Vitamin A and Vitamin B12
- Choose low fat options where possible
- Aim 2-3 portions per day



The 5 Food Groups

Meat, Fish, Eggs and Beans:

- Main source of protein and iron.
- Important for the growth and repair of cells
- Eat at least 2 portions of fish per week, including a portion of oily fish.
- Try to avoid processed meats, and eat more fish, chicken, turkey, beans or lentils instead
- Aim 2 -3 portions from a variety of protein sources per day.



The 5 Food Groups



Foods and drinks high in fat/sugar:

- High in calories and can contribute to weight gain
- Sugary foods and drinks can lead to tooth decay
- Choose healthier unsaturated fats such as olive/rapeseed/sunflower/vegetable oil.

Whether you are trying to lose, maintain or gain weight, it is important to include foods from all the groups in your diet.

Drink plenty!

- It's important to drink lots of fluid
- Aim for 2-3 litres of fluid per day
- All drinks count: water, milk, fruit juices, squashes, coffee and tea.
- Watch for signs of dehydration:
 - Feeling thirsty + a dry mouth
 - Headaches
 - Lack of energy
 - Feeling light-headed
 - Dark-coloured urine and not passing much





Common Myths

- The media provides a vast source of unregulated information around nutrition & cancer.
- There is a lack of evidence to support any alternative or specific diets in cancer treatment


'Superfoods'

- There is no scientific evidence for any one food being a 'superfood'
- Most research tests chemicals and extracts in high concentrations
- Many substances in fruit and vegetables may potentially have anti-cancer properties
- Evidence suggests it is the compounds working together in the overall diet that offers the strongest cancer prevention (World Cancer Research Fund)

Common Myths

- Methods of “detoxifying” the body and “boosting” immune function
 - Restriction of dairy foods
 - Organic foods
 - Juicing
 - Sugar-free diets
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- There is no benefit of taking vitamin and mineral supplements unless there is a proven deficiency. Aim for a healthy balanced diet.





Nutrition & Treatment

- Treatment for aplastic anaemia, MDS or AML can involve either immuno-suppressive therapy, chemotherapy, biological/targeted therapy or a stem cell transplant.
- Healthy cells can be damaged by some of these treatments and they can also cause side effects.
- Adequate symptom control is essential in optimising nutritional intake during treatment.
- Aim to eat well to maintain your weight



Side-effects impacting on the ability to eat

- Loss of appetite
- Sore mouth / throat
- Dry mouth
- Dental & gum problems
- Changes in taste/smell
- Feeling full
- Nausea
- Reflux
- Vomiting
- Diarrhoea
- Constipation
- Fatigue
- Pain
- Depression



Nutrition Support

- Relaxation of previous dietary advice
- Food fortification
- Symptom control
- Eat small amounts regularly
- Modified diets (eg. puree/soft meals)
- Oral nutritional supplements
- Artificial nutrition is sometimes indicated

Neutropenic Diet

- You are at a higher risk of food poisoning when your white cell count is low following high dose chemotherapy or a stem cell transplant.
- This diet helps you to avoid infection from food, while still having as varied a diet as possible.
- Your doctor or dietitian can advise you on this depending on your neutrophil count.
- Patient information booklet is available from bloodwise.org.uk





Seeing a Dietitian

If you are:

- struggling with eating
- losing/gaining significant amounts of weight
- experiencing prolonged side-effects impacting on your intake

then please ask to be referred to a dietitian.

Thank you!

Any questions?

More information is available from:

www.bloodwise.org.uk

www.macmillan.org.uk

www.wcrf-uk.org

www.aamds.org

