

NUTRITION SELF-ASSESSMENT

Complete this self-assessment to determine what changes you can make in your diet to improve your wellness. Following these general guidelines can help you feel your best and address some common Parkinson's symptoms, such as constipation, fatigue, weight fluctuations and even various cognitive challenges. Refer to the "Diet and Nutrition" chapter in the **Living Well Now** section for detailed explanations of the nutrition information highlighted here. Be sure to discuss with your doctor and wellness team before making major changes to your diet.

See how your current diet stacks up with the recommendations below. If you can't check all the boxes in the first section, plan for what actions you will take to improve your basic nutrition. Which additional suggestions for optimal nutrition can you incorporate into your diet? Take a trip to your grocery store, local farmer's market or natural foods market to explore the possibilities. Make a list of new foods and supplements you'll incorporate into your diet. Exploring new flavors and cuisines can be fun!

GENERAL GUIDELINES

Daily Recommendations for Basic Nutrition

- Take a general multivitamin with calcium, phosphorous, vitamin B and D.
- Drink at least eight cups of fluid per day, including when you take your medication for general health and to avoid low blood pressure and constipation.
- Select healthy snacks such as fruits, nuts, yogurt, oats, milk or soy.
- Avoid processed foods high in sugar, "bad fats," unwanted chemicals and additives. These foods actually rob you of energy.
- Choose fresh, local and organic products if you can. This will increase the freshness, level of nutrients and limit pesticides or unnecessary additives.
- Be sure to consume adequate protein. Ask your doctor how much protein is right for you each day and when to best consume protein if you experience interactions with your medications.
- Avoid fad diets and supplements in high doses.

Additional Suggestions for Optimal Nutrition

- Consuming antioxidants is essential brain and heart health. See below for suggestions on antioxidants to include in your diet.

EVERY VICTORY COUNTS

- ▶ Add omega-3s into your diet. Salmon, halibut, tuna, walnuts, almonds, ground flaxseed and fish oil tablets are good choices for omega-3s.
- Aim for 20–30 grams of fiber daily from fruits, vegetables and wheat products to help with digestion and constipation.
- Discuss with your doctor if you experience weight gain or weight loss. Some medical conditions can cause weight changes.
- Determine whether you are getting adequate levels of calcium and vitamin D, which are important supplements for bone strength.
- Consult the “Constipation Worksheet” and “Low Blood Pressure or Dizziness Worksheet” for more specific information tailored to these problems.

ANTIOXIDANTS

The following high-nutrient foods are also high in antioxidants thought to be helpful in maintaining brain and heart health:

Vitamin C: green vegetables, tomatoes, strawberries, broccoli, citrus fruits and juices, apple juice, potatoes, kiwi, green, red and yellow peppers

Vitamin E: whole grains including brown rice, green vegetables, nuts, seeds, vegetable oils, wheat germ, papayas, avocados, sweet potatoes and peanut butter

Vitamin A (Carotenoids): sweet potatoes, carrots, tomatoes, kale, collard greens, apricots, cantaloupe, peaches, pumpkin, broccoli and pink grapefruit

Selenium: eggs, garlic, chicken, fish, grains, wheat germ and bran, Brazil nuts, shellfish and beans

Lignans: flaxseed and oil (omega-3 fatty oils), rye, oatmeal and barley

Flavonoids: soy, dark chocolate (70% cacao), red grapes, cranberries, green or white tea and pomegranate

Lycopene: watermelon, pink grapefruit and tomatoes

Lutein: spinach, kale, broccoli, kiwi, Brussels sprouts and other dark green vegetables

Recommended foods that are rich in antioxidants and offer other health benefits:

- Ground flaxseed (provides fiber, omega-3 fatty acids and lignan)
- Salmon (provides omega-3 fatty acids and selenium)
- Soy products (provide protein and good source of all the essential amino acids, calcium, zinc, iron, magnesium, phosphorus, omega-3 fatty acids, fiber and B vitamins)

WORKSHEETS AND RESOURCES



- Whole grains (provide B vitamins, vitamin E, iron and magnesium)
- Berries (provide vitamin C, folate, fiber and high antioxidant properties)
- Green vegetables (provide vitamin A and C, calcium and iron)

CoEnzyme Q10: A 2014 study did not show added benefit when used early in Parkinson's. However, CoQ10 has not been shown to be harmful. Discuss with your doctor before adding this supplement to your diet.

Antioxidant supplements are also available, but should not be used in place of a healthy diet. Speak with your doctor about appropriate choices and brands when taken into consideration with your current medications.

Make a list of items you will add to your regular diet:

- | | |
|----------|-----------|
| 1. _____ | 6. _____ |
| 2. _____ | 7. _____ |
| 3. _____ | 8. _____ |
| 4. _____ | 9. _____ |
| 5. _____ | 10. _____ |