

Healthy Eating for People with Epilepsy and their Families

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Objectives

- ▶ Understand the role diet plays in overall health and well-being
- ▶ Identify components of a “real” food diet
- ▶ Learn general healthy eating tips to introduce in the new year
- ▶ Review diet therapies for treating epilepsy

Why is following a healthy diet important for everyone?

- ▶ Maintain healthy body weight
- ▶ Optimize brain function
- ▶ Reduce risk of chronic diseases such as heart disease and cancer
- ▶ Promote overall health

Why is diet of even more importance for people with epilepsy?

- ▶ May help boost the immune system
- ▶ May promote bowel regularity
- ▶ May improve sleep quality

What are the components of a balanced diet?

- ▶ Fat
- ▶ Carbohydrate
- ▶ Protein
- ▶ Vitamins & Minerals
- ▶ Water

Fat: what role does it play?

- ▶ Nutrient-dense; promote satiety
- ▶ Alternative source of fuel for brain
- ▶ Energy storage
- ▶ Protects organs and nerves from traumatic injury and shock
- ▶ Preserves body heat and temperature
- ▶ Facilitates digestive process
- ▶ Necessary for digestion, absorption and transport of fat-soluble vitamins
- ▶ Brain is the fattest organ in your body

Fats: Eat a variety!

- ▶ Saturated Fats
 - ▶ Butter, Coconut oil, Ghee, Mayonnaise, Heavy Whipping Cream, Crème Fraiche
- ▶ Monounsaturated
 - ▶ Olive oil, Avocado, Canola oil (organic expeller pressed)
- ▶ Polyunsaturated
 - ▶ Grapeseed oil, Sesame oil, Walnut Oil, Nut, Seeds
- ▶ Omega-3s
 - ▶ Fatty fish, Grass-Fed Beef, Walnuts, Chia seeds, Flaxseed

Carbohydrates: what role do they play?

- ▶ Source of fuel for body and brain
- ▶ Fiber
 - ▶ May reduce risk of cardiovascular disease
 - ▶ Helps manage blood sugar
 - ▶ Promotes healthy bowel function and gut health
 - ▶ Maintain healthy weight

Carbohydrates: Sources

- ▶ Simple (refined) and complex (unrefined)
- ▶ Starch
- ▶ Vegetables
- ▶ Fruits
- ▶ Legumes
- ▶ Dairy
- ▶ All carbohydrates are not created equal

Protein: what role does it play?

- ▶ Body's building blocks
- ▶ Direct and regulate metabolism
- ▶ Allow movement
- ▶ Protect from infection

Protein: Sources

- ▶ Eggs
- ▶ Poultry
- ▶ Red meat (beef, pork, lamb)
- ▶ Fish and Shellfish
- ▶ Cheese

Vitamins, Minerals & Water

▶ Vitamins & Minerals

- ▶ Play critical role in metabolism and maintenance of tissue function
- ▶ A well-balanced, real food based diet should be nutritionally adequate
- ▶ Supplementation may be required in certain populations
- ▶ Speak with your physician and/or dietitian about taking supplements

▶ Water

- ▶ Most indispensable nutrient; makes up 60% of an adult's weight
- ▶ Carries nutrients throughout the body, acts as a solvent, participates in chemical reactions, lubricant and shock protection and helps regulate temperature

How do I start to build a better diet?

- ▶ Eliminate simple sugars
 - ▶ These foods are rapidly absorbed in the body, increasing blood sugar
- ▶ Avoid:
 - ▶ Sweeteners
 - ▶ Sweetened beverages
 - ▶ Sweets (e.g. cake, candy, cookies, crackers, pastries, pies, ice cream)
 - ▶ Packaged and highly processed foods
 - ▶ Refined carbohydrates

Adopt a “Real” Food Diet

- ▶ What is a “real” food diet?
 - ▶ Diet consisting of foods in their natural states
 - ▶ Fruits and vegetables (fresh or frozen); organic is ideal
 - ▶ Dairy products including yogurt, milk and cheese (**full-fat, unsweetened**); organic is ideal
 - ▶ 100% whole grain products
 - ▶ Poultry, meats and seafood (**unprocessed**); organic is ideal
 - ▶ Grass-fed beef as possible
 - ▶ Wild caught fish as possible
 - ▶ Pasture-Raised chicken and eggs as possible
 - ▶ Choose water as your primary beverage
 - ▶ Most healthy people need 2 - 2.5 liters per day

Adopt a “Real” Food Diet (continued)

- ▶ Shop the perimeters of the grocery store
- ▶ Avoid processed foods
- ▶ Read food labels
 - ▶ Choose foods with ingredients you can pronounce
 - ▶ Minimally processed foods have 3 ingredients or less
 - ▶ Avoid items with more than 5 ingredients

How do I read a food label?



Nutrition Facts

Flackers - Rosemary

Serving Size: grams

Servings Per Container 6

Amount Per Serving

Calories 110 Calories from Fat 70

	% Daily Value*
Total Fat 8g	12%
Saturated Fat 0g	0%
Trans Fat 0g	
Polyunsaturated Fat 0g	
Monounsaturated Fat 0g	
Cholesterol 0mg	0%
Sodium 90mg	4%
Total Carbohydrates 8g	3%
Dietary Fiber 7g	28%
Sugars 0g	

Protein 5g

Vitamin A 0% Vitamin C 0%
Calcium 4% Iron 8%

* Percent Daily Values are based on a 2000 calorie diet.

INGREDIENTS: Organic flax seeds, organic apple cider vinegar, Bragg Liquid Aminos (vegetable protein from non-GMO soybean and purified water), organic rosemary, organic sage

Please note that these nutrition values are estimated based on our standard serving portions. As food servings may have a slight variance each time you visit, please expect these values to be with in 10% +/- of your actual meal. If you have any questions about our nutrition calculator, please contact Nutritionix.

What are super foods?

- ▶ Rich in antioxidants
- ▶ Excellent sources of vitamins & minerals
- ▶ High in fiber
- ▶ Contain anti-inflammatory agents
- ▶ Some of our favorites:
 - ▶ Avocado
 - ▶ Garlic
 - ▶ Olive Oil
 - ▶ Nuts & Seeds
 - ▶ Green Tea

Tips for success

- ▶ Make 1 change at a time (e.g. eliminate juice)
- ▶ Involve the whole family
- ▶ Plan your menu for the week and write your list before shopping
- ▶ Keep meals very simple
- ▶ Double recipes and freeze leftovers
- ▶ Do not keep “trigger” foods in the house
- ▶ Don't forget portions matter

Diet Therapies for Managing Epilepsy

- ▶ Ketogenic Diet (KD)
- ▶ Modified Atkins Diet (MAD)
- ▶ Low Glycemic Index Treatment (LGIT)
- ▶ MCT oil diet
- ▶ Custom/ Blended Diets
 - All diets incorporate the same foods and emphasis is on fat

What do these diets have in common?

- ▶ Medically supervised by a trained diet team
 - High in fat (60-90% calories from fat)
 - Low in carbohydrate (4-15% calories from carbohydrates)
 - Moderate in protein (6-25% calories from protein)
- ▶ The standard American diet consists of roughly
 - 30-35% fat
 - 50-60% carbohydrate
 - 15-20% protein

Comparing the KD, MAD and LGIT Diets

Ketogenic Diet

Pros:

- ▶ Increased diet precision- all food weighed on a scale
- ▶ Don't have to worry about "counting"
- ▶ No room for interpretation
- ▶ Increased transparency between dietitian and patient
- ▶ Less decision making on patient part

Cons:

- ▶ Can be more difficult to eat out in restaurants
- ▶ Weighing all foods can be tedious, time consuming and a challenge
- ▶ People can feel like it "medicalizes" eating
- ▶ Challenging for caregivers who enjoy cooking

MAD & LGIT

Pros:

- ▶ Uses household measurements which can be simpler
- ▶ Increased ability to eat in restaurants or in social situations
- ▶ More liberal in carbohydrates and more room for some "processed foods"
- ▶ Cooking foods can be easier

Cons:

- ▶ Can be more difficult to achieve ketosis
- ▶ Easy to overeat protein rich foods
- ▶ Counting throughout the day can be challenging
- ▶ No exact meal plan- more room for error
- ▶ Can be more difficult to fine tune

Summary

- ▶ A balanced, real-food based diet is beneficial for everyone's health and well-being
- ▶ Small changes can make big differences today and in the future
- ▶ People with epilepsy may see increased benefits from adopting a real-food diet with emphasis on healthy fats

Enjoy Lunch!

Thanks to the Epilepsy Foundation of Greater Los Angeles
for providing a “real” food lunch!