

Nutrition to Get Well at Home with COVID-19

COVID-19 is a new virus. There is no food, supplement or natural health product to prevent or cure COVID-19. You cannot get it from eating food. People can have a range of symptoms, from mild to severe. A person with severe symptoms should call **811**. Many people can manage mild symptoms at home. COVID-19 symptoms include fever, cough, trouble breathing, and poor appetite.

It is important to eat and drink well to help stop your body from losing fluids and weight.

Fever

Fever can cause your body to lose fluids. It is important to drink enough through the day, even if you are not thirsty. If the color of your urine (pee) is a light yellow, you are drinking enough.

Signs to watch for:

increased thirst	headache	dry mouth
urinating (peeing less)	dark colored urine (pee)	no appetite
cracked lips	feeling tired	

If you usually follow a fluid restriction, contact your doctor. For people with diabetes, refer to “Stay Safe When You Have Diabetes and Sick or At Risk of Dehydration” from the Diabetes Canada website.

- Try clear fluids like water, juice, Jell-O, broth, popsicles, Gatorade®, or Pedialyte® .
- Try ½ cup warm/hot or acidic fluids (orange juice) to keep mucous thin.
- For extra calories and protein, try milk, yogurt drinks, pudding, soups, milkshakes/smoothies, or drinks like Boost®, Ensure®, Carnation Breakfast Anytime®, Glucerna® or Diabetic Resource® or store brand.
- If you cannot drink enough, contact **811 via phone or online 811.novascotia.ca/**

Cough and Trouble Breathing

It may be hard to eat and drink when you are coughing or short of breath. If you cough while you eat or drink, you could choke.

- If you use puffers, take them close to mealtimes to open your airways.
- Sit up when you eat or drink, do not lay flat.
- Take time to catch your breath before you eat. Take small bites and sips.
- Stay seated for 30 minutes after you eat.
- If you use oxygen, make sure you have plenty of fluids and moist foods to avoid dry mouth.
- If you have severe shortness of breath, contact **811 or online 811.novascotia.ca/**

Poor Appetite

Even if you do not feel hungry or have lost your sense of taste or smell, you must eat well to maintain your body weight and strength.

Nutrition to Get Well at Home with COVID-19

Poor Appetite

- Try 6 small meals a day. Make each bite count. Keep track of how much you eat at each meal to maintain your weight.
 - Try to add high calorie foods like whole milk, margarine or butter, cream, ice cream, cream cheese and sour cream to your meals or snacks.
 - Try to add healthy fats like olive, canola, avocado oils or nuts and seeds.
 - Eat high protein foods like cheese, Greek or Skyr Icelandic style yogurt, milk, pudding, cottage cheese, peanut butter, eggs, meat, fish, poultry, beans, hummus, lentils, tofu, nuts and seeds.
 - Aim for a quarter of your plate as protein at meals and include protein with snacks.
 - If you cannot eat regular meals or only eat less than half of your meals, try drinks like Ensure Protein Max® or store brands. These drinks can be found at most grocery or drug stores.
-

High Protein Smoothie Recipe

1 cup milk (whole, lactose free, almond, soy or rice fortified beverage)

½ cup yogurt (of your choice), 1–2 Tbsp. peanut butter or 1 scoop protein powder

½ cup of ice cream or frozen yogurt

½ cup fruit, juice or vegetables

1 tsp. oil

****Raw eggs are not recommended****

Here are more high energy, high protein ideas:

<http://www.nshealth.ca/sites/nshealth.ca/files/patientinformation/0564.pdf>

Here are high energy, high protein ideas for people with diabetes:

<http://www.nshealth.ca/sites/nshealth.ca/files/patientinformation/0657.pdf>

(These can be found on the NSHA library website <https://library.nshealth.ca/Home>, click patient heading then search the above titles).

Getting Help from Others

People with COVID-19 will need family members, friends or neighbours to help with groceries. Your support persons can protect themselves from getting the virus by not having close contact with you when dropping off food. It is important to follow food safety rules. Wash your hands often.

Nutrition for Recovery at Home

As you keep getting better at home, it is important to eat and drink well. This will help you regain weight lost when you were ill.

You should check if you have lost any weight as this could be a sign you may need extra help.

- Look at how much of your meals/snacks you eat.
- Check your weight by using a scale or by how your clothes fit.
- If you do not improve, contact **811 via phone or online 811.novascotia.ca/**