

The Food Pyramid A Plan For Eating

Build the foundation of your daily eating plan with **6 to 11** servings from the **Bread, Cereal, Rice & Pasta Group**.

Choose an item from the **Vegetable group** at least **3 to 5** times each day.

It's a treat to enjoy **2 to 4** servings from the **Fruit Group** as part of your daily diet.

Limit your selection of **Milk, Yogurt & Cheese** to just **2 to 3** items per day.

Get protein from the **Meat, Poultry, Fish, Dry Beans, Eggs & Nuts** through **2 to 3** servings every day.

Top off your daily eating plan with **Fats, Oils & Sweets**, but only in **small quantities**.

Guidelines For a Healthy Diet

- Eat a variety of foods, and avoid those that can interact with your medications.
- Maintain a healthy weight.
- Use fat and cholesterol in moderation.
- Eat plenty of vegetables, fruits and whole-grain products.
- Use sugar and salt in moderation.
- Drink alcohol in moderation.
- Take in the daily requirements of vitamins and minerals, including calcium.



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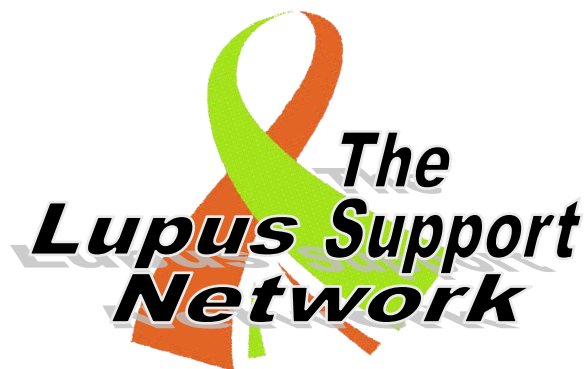
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The Role of Diet in Lupus (SLE)



The information in this brochure is a compilation of information from www.4woman.gov, A.D.A.M., Inc., NIAMS and DrKoop.com.

The Lupus Diet

First and foremost, contrary to anything you may read in the press, see on the internet, or receive via e-mail, **there is no lupus diet**. Good nutrition is an important part of the overall treatment plan for your lupus. A well balanced diet provides the necessary fuel for your body to carry on its normal functions. Although there are no specific dietary guidelines for people with lupus, there are some nutrition issues that you should know about. If any of these issues become a problem for you, talk with your doctor or nurse. They will be able to provide you with additional information and can refer you to a registered dietitian if necessary.

Weight Loss or Poor Appetite

Weight loss over the previous year is commonly reported by people who are newly diagnosed with lupus. Weight loss and poor appetite can be caused by the illness or by some medications that may cause stomach upset or mouth sores (also called mouth ulcers).

Your doctor or nurse will assess your weight loss and other related problems and suggest changes in your diet to be sure that you are eating right and have no further weight loss.

Weight Gain

Weight gain may be a problem for people who take corticosteroids. These drugs often increase a person's appetite, and, unless you are careful, unwanted weight gain will occur.

Your doctor or nurse will assess your diet and other related problems and can suggest a program to help you control your weight and lose any unwanted pounds. The program will probably include a low-fat diet, exercise, and behavior modification. A registered dietician can help you evaluate your food likes and dislikes and eating patterns and can design a diet specifically for your needs and lifestyle.

Difficulty Taking Medications

Several medications can cause gastrointestinal (GI) disturbances, such as heartburn, upset stomach, nausea, vomiting, or painful mouth ulcers.

If you are having GI problems, tell your doctor or nurse immediately. Because these problems are related to how and when a medication is taken, the dose or schedule can sometimes be changed to reduce or stop the unpleasant side effects. In some cases, the doctor may change the drug. Many medications can be taken with food, which helps reduce side effects.

Lupus Patients at Risk for Atherosclerosis

According to an article in the *New England Journal of Medicine* in 2003, people with lupus are more likely than their healthy peers to have calcification of the arteries. According to studies, the incidence of heart attack among lupus patients is five-times higher than normal. For young women with the condition, the incidence is up to 50-times higher than what would be expected. One more reason to watch your diet and eat low-fat and exercise.

Corticosteroids and the Diet

If you are taking corticosteroids your body will be more susceptible to swelling and the retention of fluids. The human body requires about 500 mg of sodium per day, while the average American usually ingests between 2,300-6,900 mg each day. The Estimated Safe and Adequate Daily Intake (ESADDI) for sodium was determined by the Committee on Dietary Allowance and the Food and Nutrition Board to be approximately 1,100-3,300 mg per day. Reducing your salt intake may make a big difference in the swelling commonly associated with the use of corti-



Dietary Recommendations

- Cultivate a diet low in saturated fats. Not all fats are unhealthy however. Some studies suggest that omega-3 fatty acids, which are fat compounds found in fish oil, black currant or primrose seed oils, and flax seed, have anti-inflammatory and nerve protecting actions.
- Choose whole grains and fresh vegetables and fruits. According to some studies, a diet rich in fruits and vegetables can lower homocysteine levels, which are elevated in SLE patients and may be a risk factor for heart disease.
- Obtain most proteins from vegetables, particularly soy, and avoiding dairy and meat products may help protect the kidneys.
- Take extra calcium and vitamin D (this is particularly useful for patients taking corticosteroids).
- Supplements of vitamins B12, B6 and folate may be necessary, especially in people whose blood tests show high levels of homocysteine.
- Exercise is safe, but patients should not expect to improve symptoms, including joint aches and fatigue.
- Restrict salt, (particularly patients with signs of hypertension and kidney disease).

(the above dietary recommendations were obtained from A.D.A.M., Inc.)

The Food Labeling Act

Since 1994, a comprehensive nutrition label has been required for most food products. Although some packages did list ingredients in the past, there were no standards for comparing one food with another. The current label required by the Food Labeling Act helps you make smart choices for a healthier diet. The Food Labeling Act also set new guidelines for health claims a food manufacturer can make. Claims like "fat-free," "cholesterol-free," "low sodium" and others are now defined by government standards.