

# COPD & Diet

What can you eat to help you breathe easier?

**If you've been diagnosed with Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease eating the right types of food can help you breathe easier.**

**Fill you plate with the right balance of healthy foods.**

¼ of your plate should be:

- Foods high in protein: lean meat, fish, chicken, milk (whole), yogurt, cheese, tofu, and eggs.

¼ of your plate should be:

- Foods that are high in vitamins and minerals
- Whole grain breads and cereals
- Whole wheat
- Brown or wild rice
- Barley
- Whole rye

½ of your plate should be:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Spinach, broccoli, cabbage, zucchini (write in green)
- Carrots, squash, peaches, cantaloupe (write in yellow and orange)
- Apples, red peppers (write in red)
- Eggplant and blueberries (write in blue and purple)
- Bananas, garlic, cauliflower (write in white)

Drink 8-10 cups of water or other non-caffeine drinks a day (this helps keep your mucous thin which helps you breathe easier). Snack on foods that are high in protein, calories, vitamins and minerals (peanut butter on whole wheat crackers, unsalted nuts), milkshakes and smoothies.

Eating food that is nutritious and high in calories can make the muscles strong that you need to breathe easier and prevent infections. By eating extra calories you have extra energy.

**Tips to decrease shortness of breath and to give you more energy:**

1. Eat 4-6 small meals a day vs 3 large meals. Preparing a freezing smaller portions of food to quickly reheat.
2. Eat foods that don't require a lot of chewing or are too thick: eggs, cheese, berries, oatmeal, creamed soups.
3. Eat slowly and catch your breath between bites.

**IMPORTANT! When to call your doctor:**

- Weigh yourself once a week. Call your doctor if you are losing or gaining weight.
- Your mucous is yellow, green or discolored. These are possible signs of an infection.
- Your breathing gets worse (coughing more or short of breath).

**For Pulmonary questions and concerns, call 423.778.COPD (2673).**



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