

# Balanced Nutrition for Wound Healing

*This handout explains how balanced nutrition supports wound healing by providing important nutrients, fighting infection, and supporting recovery.*



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digital copy of  
this handout*

Nutrients from a variety of foods help your body heal and fight infection. During recovery, your body needs extra calories and protein. If you have diabetes, it's also very important to control your blood sugar to help your wound heal.

## Important Nutrients

You need a variety of nutrients from food to keep you healthy, including:

- **Protein:** Helps with healing and preventing infections. There is protein in meats, fish, eggs, dairy, tofu, protein shakes, and powders.
- **Carbohydrates:** Help give the body the energy it needs to heal. Carbohydrates are found in grains, beans (legumes), fruits, and vegetables.
- **Fats:** Unsaturated fats and omega-3's help your body absorb vitamins and keep your skin moist. Eat nuts, seeds, olives, avocado, avocado oil, olive oil, canola oil, salmon, tuna, flax seed.
- **Vitamins:** Your body uses vitamins C, D, B-6, B-12, and folate to use energy from food, heal wounds, decrease inflammation (swelling), and help fight infections.
- **Minerals:** Iron, magnesium, calcium, zinc, and copper help with healing and immunity, and carry oxygen to your body cells. They can also help reduce pain by repairing your nervous system.
- **Water:** Water helps carry all these nutrients to the cells in your body.

## Making Healthy Meals

When making meals each day, use the handout "My Bariatric Plate" to choose a balance of foods and nutrients.

- **Add protein** to every meal
- **Add Vitamin C** from citrus fruits, tomatoes, potatoes, strawberries, bell peppers, broccoli, brussels sprouts, and kiwi. Do not take more than 250 mg in your supplements.
- **Add Zinc** to help your immune system. Eat whole grains, eggs, meat, dairy, or seafood. Your body can absorb zinc most easily from animal sources like beef and seafood. Good vegetarian sources include wheat germ, beans, nuts, and tofu. Ask your provider if you should take a 55 mg supplement.
- **Take all the bariatric vitamins your provider recommends.**