Eating Well with Post-COVID Condition

Have plenty of vegetables and fruits

Eat protein foods

Make water your drink of choice

Choose whole grain foods
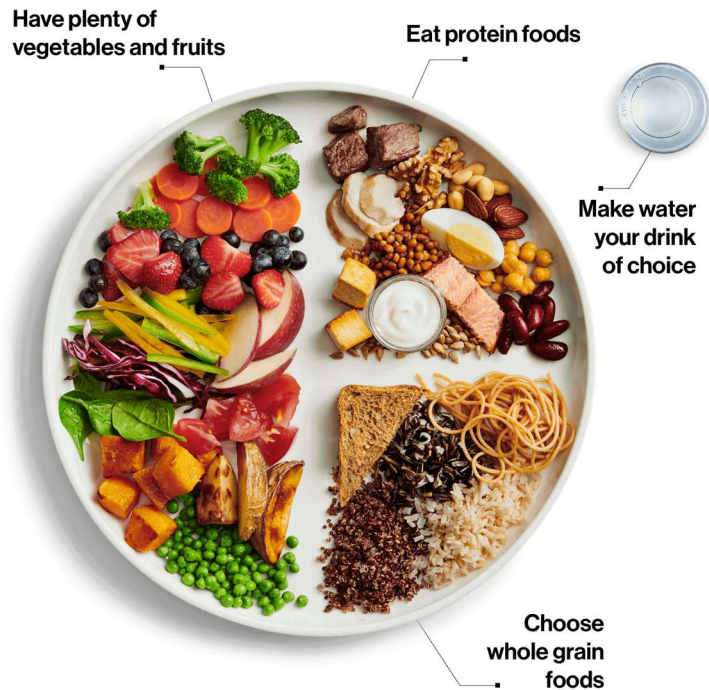
Balanced Eating

Ideal proportion of food groups to be eaten over the course of a day.

➡ Source of Protein - ¼ of your plate

➡ Source of whole grains or starches – ¼ of your plate

➡ Variety of Fruits and Vegetable – ½ of your plate

Helps with:

- Ensuring you eat all essential nutrients
- Weight maintenance
- Feeling full and satisfied
- Meal planning

Getting Enough Protein

- Post-COVID condition can lead to muscle loss, leading to increased fatigue

- Protein is an important part of recovery

  ➡ Have a source of protein at each meal and snack

  ➡ Pair a starch, vegetable or fruit with a protein to create a balanced snack

  ➡ Have at least 3 servings a day

Good Sources of Protein Include:

- Meat, fish, poultry and eggs

- Nuts and seeds

- Soy foods

- Beans, Peas and Lentils

- Low-Fat Dairy Products

- Some Whole Grains (i.e. quinoa, whole grain breads and pastas)

Low Appetite and Fatigue

➡ Post-COVID can impact your hunger, can cause symptoms that limit eating, and decrease energy to make and prepare meals

➡ Try making every mouthful count by:

- Ensuring protein at each meal and snack

- Trying small frequent meals and snacks

- Eating high protein and high energy foods

Small Frequent Meals

- Eating 3 meals a day, with snacks in-between, can:

- Ensure you're getting enough throughout the day

- Maintain your strength and energy levels

- Slow digestion

- Controls blood sugars

➡️ Even 4-6 "mini" meals a day can help improve appetite!

- How? Try:

- Splitting meals into two

- Having a smaller portion then adding a snack later

- Keeping snack within reach

- Avoiding more than 3 hours between eating

Navigating Fatigue

- Planning, shopping, preparing and cooking meals can all be fatiguing, try:

- Purchasing prepared or pre-cooked whole foods

- Have no-cook snacks "handy"

- Use frozen fruits and vegetables (no chopping needed!)

- Buy "ready to eat" fruit and vegetables (bananas, blueberries, baby carrots, salad mixes, etc.)

- Use grocery delivery or "pick-up" to save energy

- If you are too tired to eat:

- Prepare foods when you feel your best, and freeze some for later

- If you cannot eat, choose high protein smoothies and drinks

- Eat on a schedule, and eat even when you're not hungry

- Choose foods that do not require a lot of chewing

Food as Fuel – Energizing Meals and Snacks

Common Energizing Foods: berries, avocados, oranges, bananas, nuts and seeds, eggs, oats.

Meals:

- Microwave cooked oatmeal with yogurt

- Frozen vegetables added to canned soups

- Canned tuna or salmon

- Scrambled eggs and toast

- Canned beans and rice

- Peanut butter and raspberry jam sandwich

Snacks – Have a source of protein paired with a fruit, vegetable or starch

- Examples:

- Fruit and nut butter

- Fruit and yogurt

- Fruit and cheese

- Crackers and cheese

- Crackers and hummus

- Veggies and Hummus

- Half sandwich

Managing Weight Changes

- Those with Post-COVID can experience weight gain as a result of reduced activity, muscle mass loss, etc.
- To help try:

  ➡️ Eating balanced meals that include a source of starch, protein and fruit or vegetable

  ➡️ Get enough protein to promote lean muscle

  ➡️ Consume fiber from fruits, vegetables, and whole grain products

  ➡️ Practice mindful eating

Mindful Eating

- ✓ Consider your Eating Habits
- Think about what type of food you are eating
- Make positive eating choices
- Reconnect to the "why" of your eating choices
- ✓ Create a Healthy Eating Environment
- Focus on your food at meal times
- Avoid distraction like television, or eating while working

- ✓ Enjoy the taste, smell and how it feels in your mouth
- Chew thoroughly and eat slowly
- Notice the texture, aroma, flavor (is it sweet, crunchy, sweet, smooth or spicy?)
- ✓ Pay attention to what your body is telling you
- Were you hungry when you ate?
- Do you feel satisfied?

Supplement Safety

- Important to be aware when taking vitamins, minerals or nutritional supplements:
- ✓ Why a supplement is warranted
- ✓ The adequate dosage
- ✓ Safety precautions
- ✓ Starting only one at a time
- ✓ Drug interactions
- At this Time:
- No supplement has proven research to treat Post-COVID Condition and its symptoms
- No research shows supplementing over recommended dosages is effective for Post-COVID symptoms

➡️ Use reliable websites for research and to check for safety - i.e. NIH – Dietary Supplements in the Time of COVID (Consumer)

NIH > National Institutes of Health
Office of Dietary Supplements