

Eating and drinking advice for people with chronic pancreatitis

Department of dietetics and nutrition
Hepatobiliary and pancreatic services
Information for patients

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Introduction

The pancreas is part of your digestive system. It is an organ that releases chemicals for use in the body (a gland). It is located underneath your stomach. It makes insulin and glucagon to control your blood sugar levels and digestive enzymes that are important to help you break down the food you eat.

Chronic pancreatitis causes damage to your pancreas. This can have a negative impact on your nutrition. You may have symptoms that make it hard for you to eat, for example, tummy (stomach) pain, diarrhoea, indigestion, feeling sick (nausea) and being sick (vomiting). You have been referred to a Dietitian as your chronic pancreatitis is causing you to lose weight or you are not able to eat enough to meet what your body needs.

You may have been told to follow a low fat diet, but there is no evidence that this will help your pancreatitis. Fat is a very important energy source for your body.

Eating little and often

If you have lost weight, are struggling to regain weight, or have lost your appetite, the Dietitian will advise you to eat little and often. This involves grazing regularly on small meals and snacks that are high in calories and protein over the course of the day.

Helpful tips

- Try to eat 3 small meals and 3 snacks a day - little and often is best.
- Use a smaller plate to eat off as some people find a larger plate of food overwhelms them.
- Keep snacks handy to nibble whenever you can.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

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To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

- Everyone's appetite changes and you may have good and bad days. Make the most of the good days by eating well and treating yourself to your favourite foods.

Examples of the snacks to have between meals	
Crisps	Full fat mousse
Nuts and seeds	Scone with butter and jam
Crackers and cheese	Bagel with cream cheese
Hummus or dips and bread sticks or cheese straws	Bhajis
Pakorras	Spring rolls
Spring rolls	Croissants
Fruit and full fat yoghurt, custard or milk jelly	Muffins
Biscuits, cakes, fun sized chocolate bars	Bombay mix
Trifle	Crisps
Sausage roll	Scotch egg
Crème caramel	Malt loaf
Toast with peanut butter	Full fat rice pudding
	Halva

Milky drinks and powdered supplements

Some powdered drink supplements are available from your chemist or some supermarkets. These can be mixed with fortified milk for extra calories and protein: examples are Complan® and Meritene®.

Ideas for cold milky drinks

Milkshakes

Add your favourite milkshake flavouring, such as milkshake powder or syrup, to a glass of fortified milk. Try adding a scoop of ice cream, creamy yoghurt or spoon of cream for extra calories. Add fresh, tinned or frozen fruit, other flavourings such as honey, cinnamon, sugar or a couple of spoons of fruit juice.

Many supermarkets have a range of ready to drink milkshakes and smoothies that you could buy instead of making your own drinks. Some examples include Yazoo®, Friij®, Galaxy®, Mars®, or try supermarket own brands.

Fortified milk

Fortified milk can be made using 4 tablespoons (60g) of skimmed dried milk powder such as Marvel® or a supermarket own brand, mixed with 1 pint (568ml) of whole milk (blue top). Mix the dried milk powder with a small amount of milk first to make a paste and then slowly mix in the rest of the milk.

Nutritional supplements

Sometimes even with these measures it may not be possible to gain weight or to keep your weight stable. Your dietitian, doctor or specialist nurse may recommend the use of nutritional supplements. There are many varieties available to try, including milk-based, juice flavoured powder, yoghurt-style and soups.

You may need to try different products until you find the one you like. The Dietitian will recommend how many you need to take to meet your nutritional needs and if you need to take pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy with the nutritional supplements.

Sample meal plan

Breakfast	Porridge made with fortified milk Toast with extra butter or margarine, add extra peanut butter, jam or honey Yogurt with nuts, seeds and dried fruit Fruit smoothie (made with fruit, fortified milk , fruit juice, ice cream or yogurt)
Mid-morning	Coffee or tea with fortified milk Choice of scone, crumpet or muffin with butter, jam
Lunch	Jacket potato with cheese and beans Macaroni cheese made with fortified milk , add extra cream Cream of variety soup, bread and butter Rice pudding or fruit and yogurt for dessert
Mid-afternoon	Packet of crisps Cheese and crackers Milkshake made with whole milk Hummus and vegetable sticks
Main meal	Fish in creamy sauce, mashed potatoes and buttered vegetables Lentil and chick pea curry with extra cream, with rice Fruit crumble with full fat custard
Supper	Toast with pate, cheese or beans Biscuits with a milky drink using fortified milk Bowl of cereal with fortified milk

What symptoms should I look out for?

One of the roles of the pancreas is to help you to digest your food. It makes important digestive enzymes that help you break down the food you eat, so that the nutrients can be absorbed in your small intestine and used by your body.

The 3 main types of enzymes that the pancreas makes are:

- Protease, to break down protein
- Amylase, to break down carbohydrate
- Lipase, to break down fat

If you are not producing enough of these enzymes and are unable to digest your food you may have these symptoms:

- pale, orange or yellow-coloured poo (stools)
- bad smelling poo (stools)
- loose poo (stools) or urgent need to poo (pass stools)
- poo (stools) may be oily or hard to flush away
- bloating
- wind and cramping
- indigestion

If you have any of these symptoms you will need to start on pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy.

Pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy

If the pancreas is not making enough enzymes to help break down the food you eat, the food will pass through your digestive system without being broken down and absorbed. This is called **malabsorption**.

We treat malabsorption by giving you the enzymes that your body is not making enough of. You will be prescribed 1 of the following medications to help you digest and absorb the nutrition from your food.

- Creon®
- Nutrizym®
- Pancrease®
- Pancrex®

Most come as capsules, but some also come as a powder or as granules. All of the medications contain a mixture of the 3 pancreatic enzymes amylase, protease and lipase.

The enzyme replacement therapy comes in different strengths, for example Creon 25 000. The number shows the amount of lipase in each capsule.

The enzymes are mainly pork based, please talk to your doctor if you have concerns about this.

For more information on how and when to take your enzyme medication please see the patient information leaflet: Advice about taking pancreatic enzyme replacement capsules.

You can find this on YourHealth by going to the website below:

<https://yourhealth.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk/>

Constipation

Constipation is common in people with chronic pancreatitis, especially if they are on strong pain killers. Although there are dietary measures that may help, usually you will need laxatives from the GP to help you poo (open your bowels) in the short term.

It is recommended that all adults drink 6 to 8 glass of fluid each day. This can be water, tea, coffee, unsweetened fruit juice, squash and milk.

Eating a high fibre diet can also help. Tips to help you to do this are:

- Have a high-fibre cereal at breakfast like Weetabix, shredded wheat or porridge
- Add fruit and linseeds to your breakfast cereal
- Have a wholemeal sandwich at lunch
- Have wholemeal pasta with vegetables at dinner time.
- Add pulses such as baked beans and lentils to dishes
- Add extra vegetables to sauces such as bolognaise, curry and chilli

Nausea and vomiting

You may feel nauseous or start to vomit if you are having a flare up of your chronic pancreatitis. It is really important that your GP or surgical team are told as your team can prescribe anti-sickness medications to help.

Some dietary measures can help

- Eat small and frequent meals throughout the day
- Sip on nutritious liquids between meals, for example milk, fruit juice, nutritional supplements
- Give your body time to digest the food, eat food slowly and sit upright after eating
- Graze on high calorie or high protein snacks

If you have Type 3C diabetes

This is a type of diabetes that is different to the more common Type 1 and 2 diabetes. It is caused by having part or all of the pancreas removed (surgically) or the pancreas being damaged (such as in pancreatitis) You may need to give yourself insulin injections to enable your blood glucose levels to be kept within normal levels.

Individual recommendations for diet will depend on your nutrition and how you are eating and drinking at that time. The aim is to eat a diet that you enjoy, that is right for you and that keeps your blood glucose levels in an acceptable range. The most important advice with diabetes is to **eat regularly**. You should try to **avoid skipping meals**. You should **not** try to control your blood glucose levels by not eating.

If you have lost weight or are underweight then you should aim to have a high calorie and high protein diet. If your blood glucose levels are high then you should discuss adjusting your insulin dose with your diabetes team. **You should not reduce the amount of food you eat to try to control blood glucose levels**. Your dietitian will give you more specific advice on how to get the nutrients you need.

Vitamins and minerals

People with chronic pancreatitis taking pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy may need to take more vitamin and mineral supplements. This is to stop long term deficiencies such as weak bones (osteoporosis).

During the chronic pancreatitis clinic you will have a blood test to check if you have low levels of certain vitamin and minerals and we will tell you if you do.

If you have any questions please contact your dietitian

Telephone number

Developed and produced by Dietetic and Nutrition Service, University Hospitals of Leicester

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
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