

NUTRITION AFTER YOUR CHILD'S SURGERY:

Recovering and Powering Up

CHOOSE A HEALTHY DIET TO SUPPORT HEALING AND RECOVERY



BEGIN EATING AFTER SURGERY

Following surgery, your child will need the right amount of calories and nutrients to help his or her body heal. Even small amounts of foods and fluids can be beneficial early in recovery. Providing nutrients may lower your child's risk of an infection and result in a faster recovery.¹⁻⁵



MANAGE NAUSEA

Your child may have some nausea after the surgery, which can be managed by:

- Encouraging sips of clear fluids first, such as water, juice and oral rehydration solutions
- Eating smaller, more frequent meals and snacks to avoid overconsumption
- Taking small bites and chewing food well
- Limiting fried, greasy, spicy and high sugar foods or drinks
- Eating cold or room-temperature foods which are often better accepted than warm foods



FOCUS ON PROVIDING KEY NUTRIENTS

Nutrients that help your child recover from surgery include protein, vitamin C, zinc and iron. Below you'll find general information on the amount of each nutrient to provide depending on your child's age and gender. Your healthcare provider may recommend different amounts to meet your child's specific needs. They'll also help develop a nutrition plan if your child was underweight or overweight before the surgery.

PROTEIN

Protein helps build and repair tissues, such as skin and muscle. In addition to zinc and vitamin C, protein is important for wound healing.

RECOMMENDED DAILY SERVINGS* OF PROTEIN ⁶				
(AGE IN YEARS)				
1-3	4-8	9-13	GIRLS 14-18	BOYS 14-18
2	3	5	6 ½	7 ½

PROTEIN SERVING SIZES ⁷	
MEAT, POULTRY, FISH	1 oz
EGG	1
MILK, YOGURT, SOY MILK	1 cup
CHEESE	1 ½ oz
PEANUT BUTTER, NUT BUTTERS	1 tbsp
TOFU	¼ cup
BEANS, PEAS, LENTILS (CANNED OR COOKED)	¼ cup

*One serving contains approximately 7-8 grams of protein.
oz = Ounces, mg = Milligrams, tbsp = Tablespoon

VITAMIN C

Vitamin C helps to build collagen to provide structure in your child's skin, muscles and bones. Since vitamin C is found in fruits and vegetables, aim to have your child eat one at each meal and snack. Vitamin C also helps your child absorb iron, so pair foods rich in iron and vitamin C together.

RECOMMENDED DIETARY INTAKE OF VITAMIN C ⁸				
(AGE IN YEARS)				
1-3	4-8	9-13	GIRLS 14-18	BOYS 14-18
15 mg	25 mg	45 mg	65 mg	75 mg

FOODS RICH IN VITAMIN C ⁹		
BELL PEPPERS	½ cup	95 mg
KIWI	1 medium	60 mg
ORANGE	1 small	50 mg
STRAWBERRIES	½ cup	45 mg
BROCCOLI	½ cup	40 mg
CANTALOUPE	½ cup	30 mg
SWEET POTATO	½ cup	15 mg
TOMATOES	½ cup	10 mg

NUTRITION FOR RECOVERY AFTER YOUR CHILD'S SURGERY

ZINC

Zinc supports the creation of new immune cells, which contribute to the body's ability to heal from wounds.

RECOMMENDED DIETARY INTAKE OF ZINC⁸

(AGE IN YEARS)

1-3	4-8	9-13	GIRLS 14-18	BOYS 14-18
3 mg	5 mg	8 mg	9 mg	11 mg

MANY OF THE FOODS THAT ARE GOOD SOURCES OF PROTEIN ARE ALSO RICH IN ZINC¹⁰

BEEF CHUCK ROAST	3 oz	4.0 mg
BAKED BEANS	½ cup	3.0 mg
BREAKFAST CEREALS FORTIFIED	1 serving	2.8 mg
PORK CHOP	3 oz	1.9 mg
TURKEY BREAST	3 oz	1.5 mg
SHRIMP, COOKED	3 oz	1.4 mg
YOGURT	6 oz	1.0 mg
MILK	1 cup	1.0 mg
CHEDDAR CHEESE	1 oz	1.0 mg
PEANUTS, DRY ROASTED	1 oz	0.8 mg

oz = Ounces, mg = Milligrams

IRON

Iron helps the body make new red blood cells and helps support muscles. Children who are iron deficient or have anemia may be at an increased risk for an infection following a surgery.

RECOMMENDED DIETARY INTAKE OF IRON⁸

(AGE IN YEARS)

1-3	4-8	9-13	GIRLS 14-18	BOYS 14-18
7 mg	10 mg	8 mg	15 mg	11 mg

FOODS THAT ARE GOOD SOURCES OF IRON¹¹

To improve the absorption of iron, also eat foods that contain vitamin C, such as fruits and vegetables.

OYSTER	3 oysters	6.9 mg
SPINACH, COOKED	1 cup	6.4 mg
LENTILS COOKED	½ cup	3.3 mg
ASPARAGUS, RAW	1 cup	2.9 mg
BEEFS, COOKED	1 cup	2.9 mg
MUSHROOMS, COOKED	1 cup	2.7 mg
BEEF	3 oz	2.5 mg
LAMB	3 oz	2.4 mg
TURKEY, LEG	3 oz	2.0 mg
SESAME SEEDS	½ oz	2.1 mg
BLACK BEANS, COOKED	½ cup	1.8 mg
GREEN PEAS, COOKED	½ cup	1.2 mg



Good nutrition helps the body heal after surgery. It's important to consume enough fluids, calories, and the right nutrients to promote healing and healthy growth.*

If your child is unable to consume adequate food to meet their nutrition needs, talk to a dietitian or your child's healthcare team for recommendations. An oral nutrition supplement may be recommended.

*Your child's healthcare provider can help determine an appropriate nutrition plan based on your child's age and development, food allergies or intolerances, and other factors unique to your child. Some foods may not be appropriate for all ages.



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