

Cortisone and Your Diet

Cortisone is a medication used to treat respiratory and rheumatic problems. There are other names for cortisone such as Medrol and Prednisone. Cortisone often has side effects that can be helped by changing your diet.

When you take cortisone you may gain weight because it causes:

- an increase in appetite
- an increase in the amount of salt and water in your body
- a decrease in your body being able to process large amounts of sugar or carbohydrate at one time

When you take cortisone, you increase your risk of getting osteoporosis or weak and brittle bones. Cortisone decreases the amount of calcium, Vitamin D and phosphorous in your body.

Cortisone also causes muscle weakness and a loss in the amount of muscle you have as it breaks down protein in your body. Muscles are made of protein.

Follow these tips to help prevent these problems:

- Exercise to keep your bones and muscles strong. You should do some kind of exercise at least 3 times a week for 20 minutes at a time.
- Eat a healthy diet from these 4 food groups:
 1. Grain products
 2. Vegetables and fruits
 3. Milk products
 4. Meat, fish, poultry and alternatives
- If you get hungry between meals, try eating 6 small meals instead of 3 large meals.

Healthy snacks:

- fresh fruit such as apples, bananas, strawberries, cantaloupe
- water packed or light syrup canned fruit such as peaches and pineapples
- fresh vegetables such as peppers, carrots, cauliflower
- bagel with low fat or light cheese

More healthy snacks:

- air popcorn - try tossing with a small amount of olive oil and then sprinkle with Parmesan cheese or spices such as hot pepper
- vegetarian pizza
- low salt pretzels
- pita bread stuffed with vegetables or low fat cheese
- low fat yogurt with fresh or canned fruit
- whole grain cereal with low fat milk topped with canned fruit
- bread sticks, rice cakes, low fat cheese with melba toast
- Rice Krispies[®] squares, plain cookies such as Arrowroots[®]
- low fat granola bar
- low fat or light ice cream

Keep this where you can see it to remind you about your diet:

Food you should eat more of	Food you should eat less of
<p>Have 4 servings a day for healthy bones:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • skim or 1% milk - 250 ml or 1 cup • low fat or light cheese - 45 grams or 1.5 ounces (less than 18% milk fat or butter fat) • low fat or light yogurt - 175 ml or ¾ cup (less than 2%) • baked custard or pudding - 125 ml or ½ cup • low fat or light ice cream - 125 ml or ½ cup (less than 2%) • sockeye salmon with bones - ½ of 213 gm can • scallops - 7 • baked, red or white kidney beans - 250 ml or 1 cup • broccoli - 125 ml or ½ cup • almonds or brazil nuts - 125 ml or ½ cup <p>Nuts are high in fat and calories so limit.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid salt at the table. • Limit high salt items to one per day: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • salted crackers • meat extenders such as Hamburger Helper[™], casserole mixes • canned soup, dried soup mixes, gravy bases, bouillon cubes, V8 juice[®], tomato juice • smoked, salted, cured or pickled meat, fish, poultry and vegetables

Food you should eat more of	Food you should eat less of
<p>Eat 1 good source of Vitamin C each day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 125 ml or ½ cup citrus fruit or juice such as orange or grapefruit • 250 ml or 1 cup broccoli, Brussels sprouts, cabbage, green pepper, cantaloupe, pineapple, tomatoes 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Avoid salted snack foods like potato chips, pretzels, nuts which are often high in fat and calories too
<p>Eat 120 to 180 gm or 4 to 6 ounces of lean meat, fish, poultry or alternative each day. Alternatives may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 medium egg, 1 ounce or 25 gm cheese • peanut butter - 15 ml or 1 tablespoon • tofu - ½ block or 70 gm 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limit cookies, cakes, pastries, chocolate bars and candy • Avoid fried foods. (Bake, steam, broil or barbecue instead.)
<p>Include good sources of potassium each day:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • milk or milk products such as yogurt, ice cream • meat, fish, poultry • kidney beans, white beans, dried peas • bananas, melons, oranges, prunes, rhubarb, potato, squash, turnip, mushroom, parsnip, Brussels sprouts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch for hidden sugars in fruit, juices, pop, cereal, fruit packed in syrup
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase fibre by eating whole grain breads and cereals such as whole-wheat or rye bread, bran flakes, raisin bran, oatmeal, fresh fruit and vegetables 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink 2 litres or 8 cups of total liquid each day unless your healthcare provider has advised you to limit fluids