

Nutritional Support Made Easy

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Those of you who regularly use nutritional support for your patients will quickly realize today's information is very basic. It has been purposely limited in order to reach our colleagues who, for a variety of reasons, do not employ nutrition in their practices. The following recommendations are by no means optimal. However, they are a great first step for those who are interested in integrating basic nutritional support into their practices without selling specialty formulas.

Stress, injury, and illness disrupt homeostasis and increase the requirements of micronutrients. Recommendations will be divided into two sections, general recommendations to be implemented for injury, illness, and stress, and specific recommendations, which should be added to the general recommendations.

General Recommendations for Injury, Illness, and Stress:

1. Remind your patients to reduce or eliminate the consumption of stressor foods: sugar, caffeine, saturated fats, highly processed foods, and alcohol.
2. Advise your patients to drink an extra 16 ounces of water two or three times a day over their normal fluid intake. Although lifetime compliance may be difficult, following your instructions during the acute stage of their problem is easy because you will be there to remind them at least three times a week to follow your orders.
3. Patients on very low calorie weight loss programs should suspend their diets until their health returns. This does not mean they can go crazy. For example, I recommend that a patient on a 1,000 calorie a day diet increase their daily intake by an extra 300 to 400 calories while they are attempting to recover from injury or illness. The increased intake usually ranges from a few days to a few weeks at most.
4. Advise your patients to consume extra vitamin C. You will find many of your patients probably have it on their shelves, and just don't take it regularly. Specific dosing will vary greatly, depending on many factors, which we will not touch on today. However, a rule of thumb is to have your patient consume as much as they can until their stool begins to loosen. At that point, have them reduce their intake by 200 to 500 mg a day, and continue at these levels throughout the course of their treatment.

Specific Recommendations:

Acute Injuries

1. Acute injuries require extra protein. If your patient eats the standard American diet (eggs in the morning, fish, poultry, or beef sandwich at lunch, and a dinner with a fish, poultry, or beef main course), they are most likely getting plenty of protein, and after they recover could

even reduce their intake to one or two servings per day. For those patients not eating a high protein diet, I recommend they consume three quality servings per day for one to three weeks, depending on the nature and severity of their problem.

2. Have them consume a multimineral tablet meeting the RDA's of all minerals, including calcium and magnesium.
3. Those of you co-managing cases with medical doctors should be aware of what medicine the patient is taking. Look up the side effects and keep a close watch for problems. The most common allopathic treatment for musculoskeletal injuries is nonsteroidal anti-inflammatories, which are very hard on the gastrointestinal lining. To help combat this, recommend that your patients take extra vitamin A and zinc, which are involved in the steps needed to synthesize epithelial tissue.

Illness

1. Sick patient's immune systems should be supported. There are many vitamins, minerals, herbs, amino acids, and other substances with good data that demonstrate their immune-enhancing capabilities. Again, in order to keep things simple, remind your patients to consume a strong multivitamin with levels that exceed the RDA.
2. If your patient takes a daily vitamin with RDA levels only, have them double or triple their dose while they are recovering.
3. For those of you co-managing patients with medical doctors, find out what medicines they are on and the side effects. If the patients are on antibiotics, advise them to take a B complex and acidophilus, which can be taken either in capsule form or by consuming two servings of cultured milk products per day while they are on the antibiotics.

Stress

1. If you ask your patients, you will probably find most of them will say they are under stress (mine do). Moderate stress is not detrimental. However, when the stress becomes excessive, problems do occur. For the purposes of our discussion, excessive stress includes the death of a loved one, loss of job, serious injury, illness, relationship, or employment troubles. Too much stress will inhibit the healing process and weaken the immune system. Pyridoxine, pantothenic acid, and magnesium are three key nutrients that the body uses at an increased rate when stress is high. To simplify this recommendation, just make sure your patients are on a strong B complex with magnesium, coupled with the general guidelines given above.

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