

## Eating Well with Chronic Pain Checklist



### ✓ Follow a regular eating pattern

- Eating regularly provides you with energy for the day and helps prevent pain flare-ups.
- Eat within two hours of waking up.
- Have a meal or snack every few hours to help prevent blood sugar crashes.

### ✓ Aim for a balanced plate at lunch and dinner

- Include protein and high fibre foods to keep you full longer.
- Divide your plate into:
  - ✓ ½ plate vegetables
  - ✓ ¼ plate protein
  - ✓ ¼ plate whole grains & starchy vegetables



### ✓ Stay hydrated

- Symptoms of dehydration include feeling tired, headaches, dizziness, dry mouth, constipation.
- Aim for 9 – 12 cups (2.2 – 3 L) of fluid daily.
- All fluids count! Consider water, herbal tea, dairy/plant-based milk.

### ✓ Plan ahead for flare-ups

- Make extra servings of meals when you're feeling well and freeze individual portions for later.
- Have easy-to-prepare foods on hand like yogurt, fruit, chopped vegetables, eggs, or canned fish.
- Ask for help from friends and family.
- Consider simple meals such as these [Quick and Easy Meals](#).

### ✓ Focus on fresh, unprocessed foods

- Processed foods are often lower in fibre and higher in salt, sugar, and fat.
- Unprocessed foods are higher in vitamins, minerals and fibre and can help lower inflammation.
- Some examples of unprocessed foods include: fruits, vegetables, whole grains, nuts, beans, fish.
- Use label reading: 5% daily value or less sodium and saturated fat, and 15% or more fibre.

### ✓ Avoid relying on sugar and caffeine for energy

- Simple sugar gets quickly absorbed and can leave you feeling sluggish soon after eating.
- Caffeine should not replace regular meals and snacks.
  - ✓ For some individuals, caffeine can contribute to headaches and increased pain.
  - ✓ Caffeine can disrupt your sleep pattern and lead to poor sleep quality.

## Finding Balance in Meals & Snacks

Choosing higher fibre choices and pairing them with protein choices makes you feel satisfied, manages your hunger, and will keep you feeling fuller longer.

Protein Choices	Fibre Choices
Cottage cheese	Whole grain bread, pita, tortilla, naan, roti
Cheese	Whole wheat pasta
Milk or soy milk	Whole grain crackers
Greek yogurt/yogurt	Whole wheat English muffin
Eggs	Brown rice
Nuts or seeds	Quinoa, couscous, barley
Nut butters	Air-popped popcorn
Chicken, turkey	All Bran Buds
Lean beef or pork	Rolled Oats
Fish ie. salmon or tuna	Whole grain cereal
Seafood ie. shrimp	Homemade bran muffin
Beans ie. Chickpeas, black beans	Potato (with skin)
Lentils	Beans, lentils & chickpeas
Split peas	Avocado
Hummus	Fruit
Tofu, tempeh or meatless soy products	Vegetables – Raw or Cooked
Edamame Beans	Ground flaxseed
Quinoa	Chia seeds
Protein powder	
Hemp Hearts	

### Sample Snack Ideas:

- A hard boiled egg with whole grain crackers
- Overnight oats (soak oats in milk or Greek yogurt with fruit overnight)
- Nut butter and banana
- Hummus and vegetables
- Chia seed pudding (soak chia seeds, fruit and yogurt or milk overnight)
- Canned tuna on pita
- Apple with cheddar cheese

If you are struggle with access to food or having adequate finances to purchase food, please speak with one of dietitians to discuss resources.