

NIH Clinical Center Patient Education Materials

Eating Well and Maintaining a Healthy Body Weight with Pulmonary Non-TB Mycobacterial Disease (NTM)

Are you at a healthy body weight?

Eating a healthy diet and maintaining a healthy body weight are important for people with NTM. Body mass index or BMI is a calculation of weight relative to height and is an indicator of overall health. To determine if you need to gain or lose weight, find your BMI on the chart using your current height and weight.

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{weight in kilograms}}{\text{height in meters} \times \text{height in meters}}$$

OR

$$\text{BMI} = \frac{\text{weight in pounds} \times 703}{\text{height in inches} \times \text{height in inches}}$$

- If your BMI is below 18.5 (underweight), you should focus on gaining weight.
- If your BMI is between 18.5 and 29.9 (normal or overweight), you should focus on maintaining your weight.
- If your BMI is 30 or greater (obese), you may need to lose weight – talk with your physician and Registered Dietitian (RD) for further guidance.

Are you eating a healthy, well balanced diet?



Eating a healthy, well balanced diet, such as the USDA's MyPlate, will help meet your overall nutrition goals. MyPlate shows the five food groups using a familiar mealtime picture, a place setting. Key messages include:

- Include foods from all 5 food groups every day.
- Make half of your plate fruits and vegetables.
- Make at least half of your grains whole.
- Vary your protein choices (lean meat, poultry, seafood, eggs, beans, nuts and seeds).

For more suggestions on a healthy diet, visit USDA ChooseMyPlate.gov or contact NIH Clinical Center Nutrition Department at 800-849-7048.

What if you need to gain weight?

Involuntary weight loss is a common side effect of pulmonary NTM. This can happen because of increased energy (calorie) needs with infection, decreased appetite, early satiety (feeling full quickly), nausea, taste changes or fatigue. The best way to gain weight is to eat and drink more energy or calories.

If you need to eat more calories:

- Eat 5-6 small meals per day.
- Keep your favorite foods on hand.
- Choose high calorie beverages such as whole milk, 100% fruit juice, sweetened soda, milkshakes, Boost® and Ensure®.
- Add fat to foods by including butter, margarine, vegetable oils, nuts, peanut butter, mayonnaise, sauces, gravies, cheese and salad dressings.
- Sweeten foods and beverages with sugar, jam, jelly and honey.
- Use full-fat or regular versions of foods instead of low-fat or fat-free.
- Avoid foods that say “lite,” diet” or “low-calorie.”

If you feel full quickly:

- Drink fluids between meals rather than with meals.
- Eat high calorie foods first at a meal—avoid filling up on low calorie items such as salads.

If you feel nauseous:

- Try cold or room temperature foods that have fewer odors.
- Try dry, starchy or salty foods such as pretzels, saltines or potatoes.

If you are experiencing taste changes:

- Try adding spices and condiments to foods to make them more appealing.
- Eat with plastic utensils if you have a metallic taste in your mouth.

If you feel fatigued:

- Ask family members and friends to help with grocery shopping and food preparation.
- Focus on convenience foods that require little or no preparation (yogurt, nuts, nut butters, trail mix, string cheese, etc).

What should you do next?

If you have an underweight BMI, are experiencing unexplained weight loss or just want to discuss a healthy diet, ask to meet with a Registered Dietitian.



PowerPoint (Office 2010) [Computer Software]. Redmond, WA: Microsoft

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