

Nutrition Therapy for Children with Crohn's Disease

Your doctor has suggested nutrition therapy for you to help you get well. Nutrition therapy works to help heal the inflammation or soreness in your bowel due to Crohn's disease, although it is not fully understood why it works.

Nutrition therapy works better than steroids to heal your bowel, without any bad side effects. Most children report more energy and weight gain, and generally feel better. Nutrition therapy also helps support healthy growth.

What is nutrition therapy?

Nutrition therapy has 2 phases. In phase 1, a special drink (formula) will give you all of the nutrients your body needs. In phase 2, you will be able to slowly add foods back into your diet. Your health care team will tell you how long each phase will last.

Phase 1

During phase 1, you will get all of your nutrition from formula. Your dietitian will tell you what type and how much formula you need each day.



You can also drink water in phase 1. Your dietitian will tell you how much water you need each day.

Can I have any other foods and liquids during phase 1?

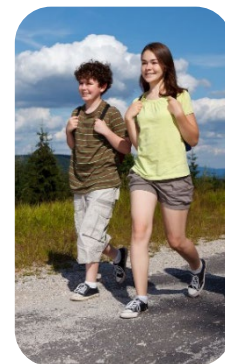
No, you can only have formula and water.

Why is it important to follow my nutrition plan?

This therapy works best when you follow your nutrition plan. If you have other foods or liquids during this phase, your bowel may take longer to heal or it may not heal completely.

Useful tips

- Pack formula when you will be away from home during a meal or snack. Use an ice pack to keep it cold, or pour it into a chilled thermos.
- Drink out of different styles of cups, such as a cup with a straw and lid, a brightly coloured cup, or a tall and narrow cup.
- Mix flavours to change the taste.
- Change the temperature of the formula. Heat it up and serve it warm, or add ice to serve it cold.
- Change the texture of the formula. Freeze it in molds to make ice pops, or blend it with ice.
- If your child has to miss a special meal, freeze a portion for them to enjoy at a later date.
- Connect with family and friends outside of meal and snack times. For example, play a card game, do a craft or go for a walk.
- Keep active. Activity will help keep you healthy and strong. It may also help keep your mind off your nutrition plan.



My nutrition plan for phase 1

Phase 1 will last _____ weeks.

My start date: _____ My end date: _____

The formula I can have is called:

I need ____ bottles of formula each day.

I need ____ cups of water each day.

Notes from my healthcare team:

Phase 2



In phase 2, you will be able to slowly add foods back into your diet. Your formula will be gradually cut back, and regular food will be gradually added.

By the end of this phase, you'll be back to eating as usual.

Your doctor may decide your bowel needs more healing or you need to gain more weight. If this is the case, you may need to keep having some formula in addition to eating your regular meals and snacks.

Slowly add foods back to your diet

Your dietitian will tell you how to add foods back to your diet. Choose a variety of healthy foods to ensure you get the nutrients your body needs.

Begin with low fibre foods

These foods are the easiest to digest.

- Fish, shellfish, poultry, lean meat, eggs, peanut butter
- Milk, yogurt, cheese, and fortified soy beverage
- Ripe, soft fruit without seeds and skins
- Soft, cooked vegetables and fruits with seeds and skins removed
- White or 60% whole wheat bagels, bread, pita, roti, and tortillas
- White rice, pasta, and couscous

After about one week, start to add medium fibre foods

Try small amounts of foods at first to make sure you tolerate it.

- Brown rice
- Canned tomatoes
- Cooked string beans
- Green leafy vegetables
- Rolled oats
- 100% whole wheat bagels, bread, pasta, pita, roti, and tortillas

After about one more week, add high fibre foods gradually

- All vegetables and fruit as tolerated, both raw and cooked
- Cooked beans, peas and lentils in small amounts
- Granola, bran cereals or bran muffins
- Nuts and seeds
- Popcorn
- Wild rice and other whole grains

A healthy long-term diet for Crohn's disease includes medium and high fibre foods. Continue to add more of these foods over time.

Ask your dietitian any questions you have about how to follow your nutrition plan.

My nutrition plan for phase 2

Phase 2 will last _____ weeks.

My start date: _____ My end date: _____

Notes from my healthcare team:

Contact information for my healthcare team:

For more support



- Talk to your healthcare team.
- Call Health Link at 811 and ask to talk to a dietitian or complete a [self-referral form](#) on ahs.ca/811.
- Visit ahs.ca/nutrition.