

NUTRITION FOR WOUND HEALING

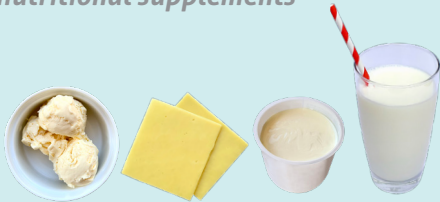
- **Nutrition is integral in preventing and treating wounds.** Good nutrition supports the growth and repair of healthy bodily tissues. Poor nutrition impairs the wound healing process and slows down recovery.
- **When the body is healing a wound**, such as post-surgery wounds, pressure ulcers and diabetic ulcers, **more nutrients are required to maintain normal bodily functions.**
- **If these additional nutrients are not consumed, the body starts to break down muscle**, which can lead to malnutrition and further impair the body's ability to repair wounds.

Key nutrients for wound healing:

ENERGY

The larger and more complex a wound, the more energy required. Extra calories are essential, so the body does not break down its own muscle to supply energy.

Good sources: Full cream milk, cheese, yoghurt, ice cream, oral nutritional supplements



PROTEIN

Adequate protein supplies amino acids (protein building blocks) to the wound, ensuring the development of new tissues.

Good sources: Meat, eggs, legumes, nuts, fish, poultry and dairy



HYDRATION

Dehydration can impair wound healing as skin can be more prone to breakdown. Aim to consume at least 1.5L of fluid per day.



VITAMINS AND MINERALS

There are certain vitamins and minerals that play an important role in skin health and wound healing. In some circumstances, multivitamins or other supplements may be useful.

Micronutrient	Dietary sources
Vitamin C	Oranges, grapefruit, kiwifruit and tomatoes
Zinc	Poultry, red meat, dairy and eggs
Iron	Red meat, fish, eggs, nuts, leafy green vegetables and fortified grains
Vitamin A	Eggs, dairy, fish, green leafy vegetables and orange vegetables
Arginine (an amino acid)	Found in chicken, turkey, pork, dairy, chickpeas and nuts. It is often added to nutritional supplements as it may be difficult to consume enough arginine through diet alone

A word about Arginine

Arginine is an amino acid (a building block of protein) which has been found to be essential for wound healing, when the body's need for arginine is higher than usual. For chronic wounds that aren't healing, an arginine enriched nutritional supplement in addition to the foods mentioned above, can be beneficial.