



HÄLSA
wellbeing

Supporting Staff Wellbeing Eating Well With Long Covid

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Session Overview

- ✓ The link between the Immune System and Gut Health
- ✓ Stress and Nutrition
- ✓ Foods to support your immune system and aid recovery
- ✓ Key Vitamins
- ✓ Food and Energy
- ✓ Blood Sugar and energy levels
- ✓ The importance of a protein rich start to the day/shift
- ✓ Menu for a healthy day
- ✓ Healthy, high protein snacks
- ✓ Loss of taste and smell



ReviveYOU
Keeping you **well**
after Long Covid



ReviveYOU: Eating Well with Long Covid

Immunity & Gut Health; what's the link?

- ✓ The Immune System is your body's natural defense system. It's an intricate network of cells, tissues, and organs that band together to defend your body against invaders
- ✓ Protecting your gut microbiome is key to your health and wellbeing and can help support your recovery from illness
- ✓ Common gut symptoms in Long Covid are feeling sick, bloating, pain and diarrhoea so supporting your gut health can help to reduce the impact of symptoms
- ✓ Approximately 80% of the Immune System is in the digestive tract



Stress and Nutrition



- ✓ Both physical and emotional stress can seriously impact on our eating habits and digestive system.
- ✓ When we experience long term illness our body will naturally experience more stress on all levels.
- ✓ The body seeks to prioritize the most important functions such as heart rate and breathing and during a period of stress, digestion is shut down.
- ✓ Because the digestive system is under strain during periods of stress your body requires more nutrients than it normally would.
- ✓ Making healthy food choices during this time can really help to support your physical and emotional wellbeing and in turn support your Immune System.



Foods to Support Your Immune System

✓ Including these foods can help to support your Immune System:

Foods that can help control inflammation

- Garlic
- Ginger
- Oily Fish (increase air flow and protect lungs)
- Berries
- Cruciferous vegetables (broccoli, cauliflower, brussel sprouts, kale)
- Avocados
- Turmeric
- Walnuts, pinenuts, pistachios & almonds
- Dark chocolate

Anti Viral

- Black Tea
- Garlic
- Shitake mushrooms
- Ginger
- Apple cider vinegar
- Cinnamon
- Yoghurt
- Pre & Probiotics

Remove free radicals (oxidants that damage cells)

- Ginger
- Oats
- Barley
- Pinto, black and kidney beans
- Extra virgin olive oil

4 Key Foods to support Immune Health

- ✓ **Ginger:** may help decrease inflammation, which can help reduce a sore throat and other inflammatory illnesses. Ginger may also help decrease nausea.
- ✓ **Citrus Fruits:** Fruits containing Vitamin C are thought to increase the production of white blood cells. These are key to fighting infections.
- ✓ **Broccoli:** is supercharged with vitamins and minerals. It is packed with vitamins A, C and E. The key to keeping its power intact is to cook it as little as possible!
- ✓ **Sunflower Seeds:** are full of nutrients, including phosphorous, magnesium and vitamin B-6. They are also incredibly high in Vitamin E, a powerful antioxidant.



Foods to Support You During Stress & illness



✓ *Including foods which contain Vitamins B, C and Magnesium can help to support your body during periods of stress and illness:*

Vitamin B

- Bananas
- Leafy greens
- Nuts and seeds
- Meat
- Fish
- Dairy products

Vitamin c

- Oranges
- Tomatoes
- Peppers
- Leafy greens
- Broccoli

Magnesium

- Nuts and Seeds-Brazil nuts and pumpkin seeds
- Beans
- Lentils
- Whole grains

Key Immune Supporting Vitamins



- ✓ **Taking vitamins via food can really support you with building your Immune System.**

Do you get enough of these key vitamins?

- ✓ **Vitamin A:** Helps to support immune tolerance across the entire gut lining
- ✓ **Vitamin C:** Helps to increase the production of white blood cells
- ✓ **Vitamin D:** Helps to support our bone and muscular health as well as supporting the immune systems
- ✓ **Zinc:** Essential for cells of the immune system

Vitamin A

- Fish liver oil
- Liver
- Carrots
- Dark green veg
- Yellow fruit & veg
- Eggs, milk and dairy products

Vitamin C

- Citrus Fruits
- Berries, cantaloupe melon
- Green & leafy veg
- Tomatoes
- Potatoes & peppers

Zinc

- Seafood – esp. oysters
- Yogurt, milk, eggs
- Almonds, pumpkin seeds
- Beef, poultry
- Pulses

Vitamin D

- Oily fish – such as salmon, sardines, herring and mackerel
- Red meat
- Liver
- Egg yolks
- Mushrooms esp. Chestnut variety

Food and Energy

- ✓ Food stores energy
- ✓ Eating transfers the stored energy from the food to our body.
- ✓ If we get the right start to our day in terms of food energy, we feel better, are more productive, support our physical energy and reduce fatigue as well as avoid energy slumps.



- **Sugars and Refined Carbs**=quick energy release
- **Legumes, Fruits and Grains**=sustainable energy release

Good nutrition = ensuring your body gets all the vitamins, nutrients and minerals it needs to work at it's optimum level.

Simple planning and healthy and tasty ideas and alternatives = feeling more energised and healthier.

Your body and brain will thank you for it!

How The Body Converts Food To Energy

- ✓ Food breaks down to glucose, amino acids, and fats in the digestive system.
- ✓ When we eat food, it releases into the blood the reserve supply of glucose from the liver.
- ✓ The blood carries this glucose to provide instant energy to the body.

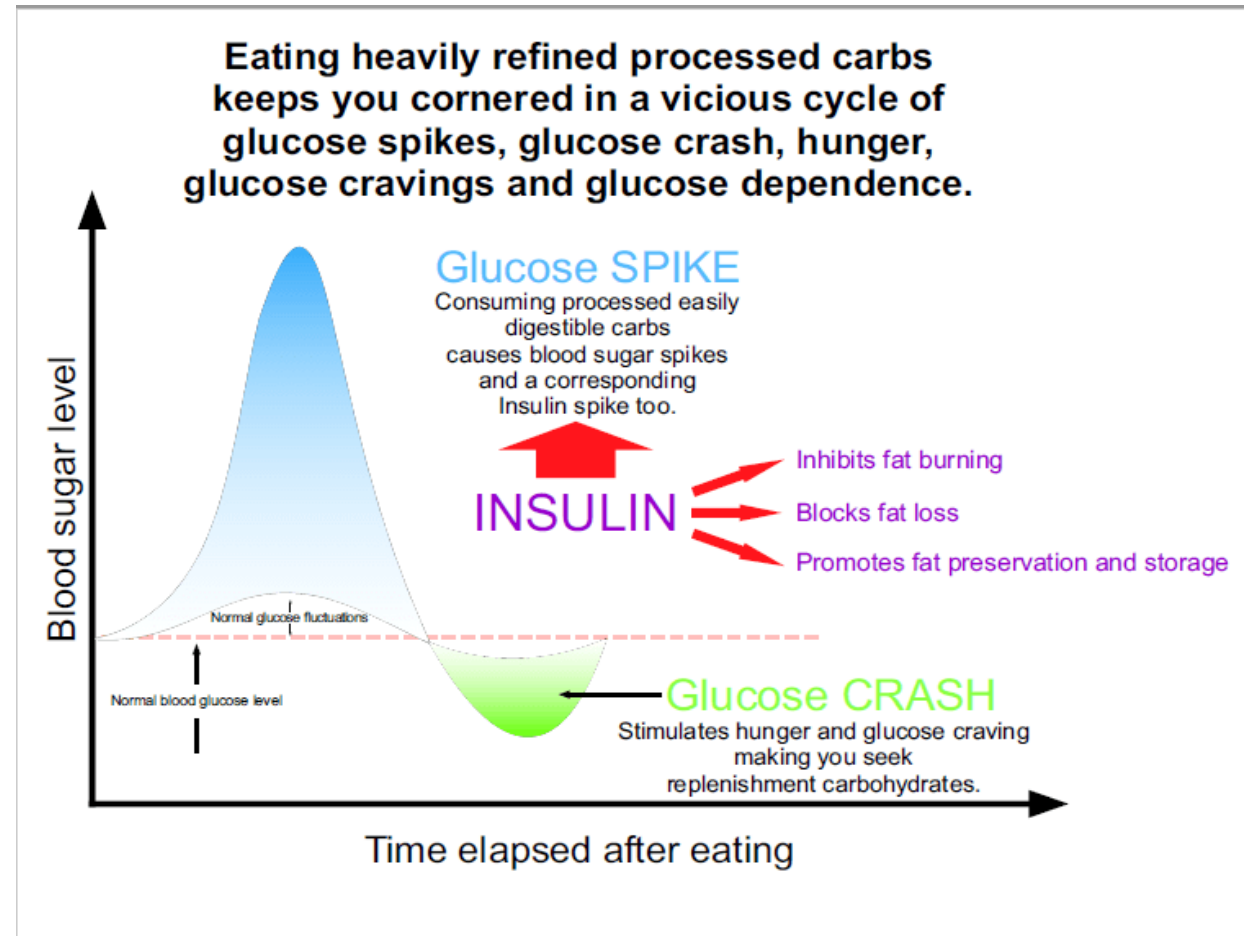
CHOICES!

- ✓ When we choose more sugary and fatty foods this can disrupt our blood sugar and decrease our quality of sleep

NB: what we eat now gives us energy later so getting the right start to your working day is key to managing how you feel for the rest of the day!

Managing Blood Sugar To Support Energy Levels

- Blood sugar levels can have a serious impact on your energy
- Insulin is the chief driver of fat accumulation in the body.
- The higher the blood sugar rise the more insulin is secreted in response.
- The bigger the crash, so the bigger the craving and the hungrier you are!



“Eat like a King in the morning, a Prince at noon, and a Pauper at night.”

Eating a **good breakfast** is important for **blood sugar regulation**, **adrenal health** and immune system health.

Tips

Breakfast - mix oats with enough protein so you benefit from the slow release of sugar and stay feeling satisfied for longer.

Eggs - are an excellent source of protein and are versatile as a breakfast option.

Try to mix with smoked salmon or another oily fish for a nutritious start to the day.

If you don't eat fish try with some wilted spinach and chestnut mushrooms.



Foods that provide energy

- Bananas
- Apples
- Avocados
- Sweet Potatoes
- Berries
- Yoghurt
- Eggs
- Wholegrains
- Oats
- Pulses
- Nuts and Seeds
- Dark chocolate

An Example Day



Breakfast

- Muesli or rolled oats
- Nuts and seeds (as many as you can)
- Handful of berries
- Full fat probiotic yoghurt

Tip: sprinkle cinnamon on muesli oats and yoghurt to add an anti-viral boost



Lunch

- Mackerel pate / houmous
- Green salad
- If going for bread, have something darker: rye, seeded or wholemeal
- Soup



Dinner

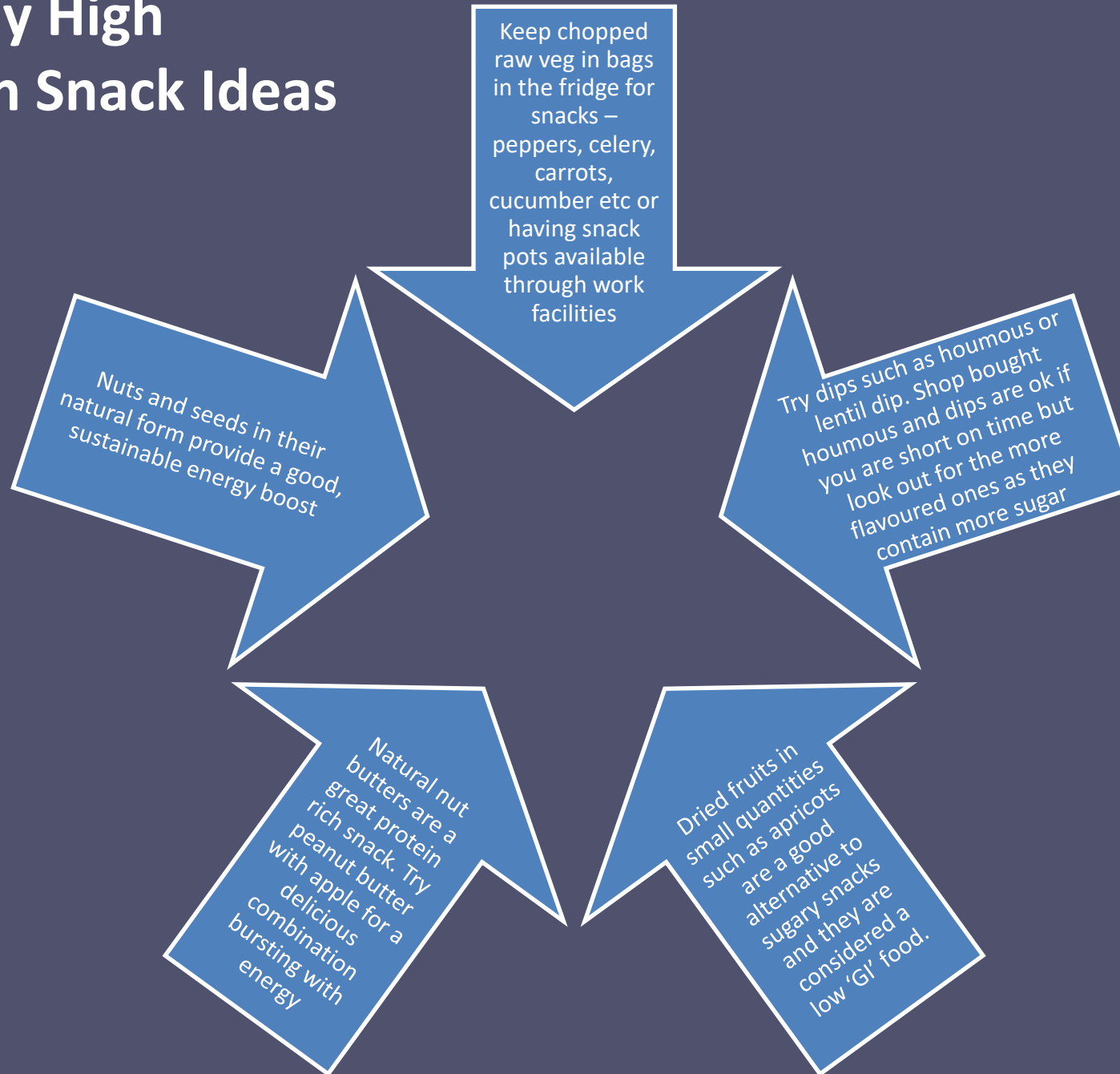
- Stir-fry with extra garlic and ginger
- Add protein: cashew nuts, salmon or tofu
- Dark chocolate or a full fat yogurt



Snacks

- Brazil nuts dipped in dark chocolate
- Handful of sunflower seeds/pumpkin seeds/cashew nuts

Healthy High Protein Snack Ideas



- ✓ **Swap Crisps for a handful of nuts or toasted seeds (pumpkin seeds are delicious toasted and eaten as a snack or sprinkled on soup or salad)**
- ✓ **Swap chocolate for some fresh fruit such as grapes, apples and bananas. Dates are a really good 'sweet alternative', packed full of fibre and will help to keep you feeling full for longer**

Loss of appetite, taste and smell

- You might lose your sense of smell when you have COVID. Research from other viruses that affect your sense of smell shows us that smell usually returns within two weeks but can sometimes take longer. Some people find that they also lose their sense of taste when they lose their sense of smell
- The flavour of food comes from smell and taste which can mean you might not eat as much because you simply don't feel hungry, or food isn't as enjoyable
- Try a diet which supports your gut health and diversity such as the Mediterranean type diet (considered to be an anti-inflammatory diet)
- Try to eat smaller, regular meals during the day
- Try not to have a drink with your meals and instead drink between your meals
- Soft food such as mashed potatoes and soup can be easier to eat if your mouth is sore and your appetite is low

Top Tips:

- ✓ Try foods with a variety of flavours, textures and temperature. Experiment to find out what works for you
- ✓ Keep up with good oral hygiene and rinse your mouth with water if you feel it is dry
- ✓ Keep your protein levels good to support energy levels NB: protein rich foods can leave a metallic/bitter taste after Covid
- ✓ Try using non-metallic cutlery if you are struggling with bitter taste

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Resources

www.bbcgoodfood.com

www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well

www.nutrition.org.uk

[Long COVID Taste and smell - Your COVID Recovery](#)

[Long COVID Eating well - Your COVID Recovery](#)

Suggested Reading

- ✓ Foods that harm Foods that heal – Readers Digest
- ✓ Nutrition for Life – Lisa Har and Dr Dawin Deen



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Thank you
Any questions?

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