



# COPD & Nutrition

**COPD (chronic obstructive pulmonary disease)** is a progressive lung disease that makes breathing more difficult. Common symptoms of COPD include shortness of breath, fatigue, chest discomfort, weight loss, and coughing.

## **A common nutritional concern for COPD is weight loss.**

- As the lungs lose their ability to function, the body must work harder to breathe, leading to an increase in the number of calories burned. The number of calories eaten per day must increase to meet this need.
- Increased fatigue and shortness of breath can make it difficult to eat at times.

## **Tips for the Prevention of Weight Loss**

- Eat numerous meals/snacks throughout the day (5 or 6 total)
- Eat slowly and enjoy the company of others
- Choose foods high in calories and avoid those considered “diet,” “light,” or low in fat or calories
- Choose foods high in protein such as milk, cheese, yogurt, eggs, fish, meats, poultry, nuts, and beans
- Continue to enjoy a variety of fruits and vegetables, for plenty of vitamins and minerals, with extra calories added to them:
  - Add peanut butter to fruits
  - Top vegetables with cheese, butter, or salad dressing
  - Make salads with nuts, cheese, avocados, meat, and regular dressing.

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**Fat** is a very concentrated source of calories, so adding foods or condiments with fat can increase the number of calories in a meal:

- Choose cream based soups instead of broth-based soups
- Add butter or margarine to foods
- Add peanut butter to toast or oatmeal
- Add extra cheese to foods
- Choose regular salad dressing
- Add avocado and guacamole to vegetables and salads



Have family and friends help with meal preparation, prepare food in advance, or choose meals that require little-to-no preparation to avoid extra work which could lead to fatigue and loss of appetite.

Some individuals may find it easier to drink instead of eat to get extra calories. Some options for high calorie drinks include:

- Milkshakes
- Whole milk
- Fortified milk (whole milk with milk powder added)
- Oral nutritional supplements

Check with a dietitian or doctor for your specific dietary needs.

*Additional Notes:*