Nutritional Guidelines for Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease

Food provides your body with nutrients (carbohydrates, fats, and proteins) as fuel to perform different activities, including breathing. If you have COPD, your breathing muscles may require up to 10 times more calories than a person without COPD. Well balanced diet is also important to fight off chest infections and to maintain functions of the lungs in COPD.

Tips for Eating Right:

- **Try small, frequent meals:** will prevent filling up your stomach and shortness of breath
  - Try eating six small meals a day instead of three large ones

- **Eat a variety of foods:** different foods provide us with different nutrients
  - Eat foods from each of the basic food groups: fruits and vegetables to provide you with vitamin C, antioxidant and fiber; dairy products such as milk, yogurt, cheese to provide calcium and protein; cereals and grains to provide you with carbohydrate and energy; meats such as fish, pork, poultry and beef are good sources of protein
  - If you are taking diuretics (water pills), they might deplete the potassium level in your body. Try to increase your intake of potassium foods, such as potato, tomato, banana, cantaloupe, orange and orange juices

- **Eat your main meal early:** will help you obtain enough energy to last you for the day
  - Try to eat your main meal for breakfast

- **Avoid foods causing gas or bloating:** can cause discomfort and even shortness of breath
  - Some gas causing foods are carbonated beverages, fried, greasy, or heavily spiced foods, apples, avocados and melons, beans, peas, lentils, broccoli, cauliflower, corn, brussels sprouts, cabbage, cucumbers, leeks, green onions, onions, shallots, peppers, pimentos, radishes and soybeans
- **Limit Salt Intake**: your body holds onto water when you eat too much salt, causing breathing to be more difficult
  - Limit foods that are high in sodium: Fast food-burgers, pizza, breaded chicken or fish, luncheon meats, hot dog, sausages, ham, bacon, cheese, salted pork, sardines, ketchup, canned tomato puree, soy sauce and canned soup, snacks such as chips, peanuts, popcorn, pretzel, saltine crackers

- **Avoid foods that supply little or no nutritional value**: make every bite you eat count.
  - Do not waste your energy and money in consuming foods that provide little or empty calories such as black tea, coffee, soda, potato chips, candy bars etc.

- **Limit caffeine intake**: caffeine depletes the body’s fluid supply which can cause dehydration and it may also interfere with medications
  - Avoid frequent intake of dark colored sodas, coffee and tea. Limit to 2 cups or less.

- **Choose foods that are easy to prepare or that you can grab and go**:
  - Cracker w/ peanut butter or jelly, sandwiches, canned fruit and fruit juice, fresh or dried fruit, cheese, eggs, milk, yogurt, ice cream, energy bars or liquid nutrition supplements

- **Drink beverages after a meal**: drinking before or during the meal might make you feel full or bloated.
  - Water, juices, milk and soymilk are good sources of fluid

- **Maintain a healthy weight**
  - Be physically active and try to exercise if possible

Dietitian: ________________________             Contact: _____________________
COPD: Tips to Gain Weight

Almost 50% of patients with COPD are underweight and malnourished.

The following are some helpful tips to gain weight:

- Drink whole milk/cheese/yogurt unless you are lactose intolerant
- Go for a stroll or a walk to stimulate your appetite
- Include variety of your favorite foods in your meals
- Try eating high-calorie foods in your meal first. Do not waste your energy and money in consuming foods that provide little or empty calories such as black tea, coffee, soda, potato chips, candy bars, etc.
- Use nutritional supplements like Ensure or Boost or Carnation Instant Breakfast. You can consume them as snacks; But do not replace your meals with these supplements

Ways to Increase Calories:

- Add a whipped topping to
  - Cocoa, Baked goods, Jello, Pudding, Fruit Pancakes, and Waffles
- Add ice cream or frozen yogurt to
  - Smoothies, Ginger ale or Milk drinks
- Add yogurt to
  - Cereal, Fruits, Jello, Desserts, and Pies
- Add a small amount of butter, soft margarine, mayonnaise to
  - Toast, Baked Potatoes, Salads, Crackers, Muffins, Sandwiches
- Add regular dressing on your salads

Ways to Increase Protein:

- Add one tablespoon of dry milk powder to
  - Milk, Soups, Mashed Potatoes, or Cooked Cereals
- Melt cheese on
  - Sandwiches, Bread, Muffins, Vegetables and Casseroles
  - Sprinkle grated cheese on soups and salads
- Add peanut butter to
  - Toast or Crackers or Fruits like bananas and apples
- Keep hard-cooked eggs in the fridge. Add to salads, casseroles, soups and vegetables.
COPD: Tips to Lose Weight

If you are overweight, heart and lungs have to work harder, making breathing more difficult, and the extra weight may demand more oxygen. Weight loss improves respiratory muscle function, improves shortness of breath and reduces burden on your lungs.

Choose foods that are low in fat and sugar:
- Choose whole-grain breads, not donuts, sweet rolls or croissants
- Choose fresh fruits and vegetables more often
- Cut down fried and greasy foods, choose baked or grilled foods instead
- Baking, broiling and roasting are the healthiest ways to prepare meat. Select low-fat, lean cuts of meat. Remove skin and visible fat before cooking
- Choose skim milk or low-fat milk. Try low-fat cheese (for example, skim ricotta, part skim cheese, or 1% cottage cheese). Use non-fat yogurt and sherbet
- For your heart health, choose vegetable oil and soft margarine rather than butter

Ways to avoid overeating:
- Watch your portion size. Eat small portions frequently
- Do not watch TV while eating, this may distract you and you may tend to overeat
- Drink water or sugar free fluids before a meal
- Eat breakfast to kick-start your metabolism for the day and eat light toward the end of the day
- Do not skip meals, this will just make you overeat at other meals

Ways to be physically active:
- Be active for at least 30 minutes on most days (e.g. walking), as exercise helps to burn body fat
- Perform gardening or home repair activities
- Dance to music
- Play with children or pets
- Park your car farther out or get off the bus several blocks away and walk