

Healthy Ways to Help Put Weight On

Scleroderma Foundation Michigan Chapter

When a person faces a potentially debilitating chronic disease such as scleroderma, in which fatigue, digestive difficulties and nutrient deficiencies are common, a high quality, nutritious diet must take center stage to enhance quality of life and successful management of symptoms.

Individuals who eat less because they have difficulty chewing, swallowing, and/or preparing their own food may suffer from inadequate nutrient intake. This could cause excessive weight loss and malnutrition.

If you have lost an excessive amount of weight, consider the following to help restore weight and nutritional status:

- Have your doctor rule out small bowel bacterial overgrowth and gastroparesis.
- Liberally add sources of healthy fats to your diet such as olive, canola and peanut oils; nuts, seeds and nut butters; avocado; fatty fish; and oil-based salad dressings.
- Make homemade smoothies using fruit, yogurt, 2 percent milk, one to two tablespoons of peanut butter, one to three tea- spoons of canola oil, Carnation[®] Instant Breakfast and/or whey protein powder.
- Include a high-protein liquid nutrition supplement (such as Ensure[®] Plus or Boost Plus[®]) between meals one to three times per day. If you are unable to tolerate those options, try Boost Breeze[®], a high protein juice- based alternative.
- Eat every two hours to maximize calorie and nutrient intake.

If you are eating less due to problems chewing or swallowing, try these suggestions:

- Blend fresh fruits and vegetables into juice.
- Make homemade smoothies using fruit, yogurt, 2-percent milk, Carnation[®] Instant Breakfast and/or whey protein powder.
- Include soft, moist protein sources during meals and snacks such as cottage cheese, scrambled eggs, yogurt, fish, chicken with gravy, ground meats, macaroni and cheese, or lasagna.

