

NUTRITION THERAPY

AND ITS ROLE IN RECOVERY

WHAT IS NUTRITION THERAPY?

Medical Nutrition Therapy (MNT) is an evidence based medical approach that uses nutrition to treat certain conditions. Through a diet tailored to the individual, MNT can be very effective and therapeutic. There is room for growth in the use of MNT as part of long term Substance Use Disorder and Drug Use Disorder treatment.

HOW CAN NUTRITION THERAPY HELP ME?

Research shows that nutrition is important in multiple stages of recovery, including:

- Active Addiction
- Detoxification & Early Recovery
- Mid-Recovery
- Long-Term Recovery

ACTIVE ADDICTION

During this stage, many report eating less than 3 times a week. Cravings for the drug of dependence take precedence over food. Calories and nutrients are vital to sustain life.



DETOX & EARLY RECOVERY

Most individuals are severely malnourished upon entering recovery. Calories are necessary to gain weight and nourish the body. Cravings for sweets are very common during detoxification. Sugar activates the same pleasure center of the brain as many addictive drugs. It is easy to confuse cravings for food with the desired drug during this stage. Establishing a meal routine may help.





MID-RECOVERY-MONTHS 3-6

This is similar to the previous stage. However, healthy weight gain has now been achieved. Cravings for sugar may continue and result in further, unhealthy weight gain. Many people get discouraged as they become overweight. Combining exercise, healthy food options, and scheduled meals may be therapeutic. Maintaining a healthy weight can help one build self esteem. This confidence plays an important role in long term recovery.



LONG TERM RECOVERY

During this stage, having a routine will help you to stay healthy. Start by learning to schedule nutritious meals. A balanced diet may alleviate depression and anxiety and increase the likelihood of long term success.



TIPS FOR THE ROAD AHEAD

Establish a meal routine. Breakfast, lunch and dinner. It will help you stay focused and feel in control.

Focus on fruits & vegetables. Eating plenty of these will help you to avoid sugar cravings.

Learn to cook healthy meals. You will feel accomplished after mastering this important skill.

Maintain a healthy weight. It is important to reduce risk of disease and remain in control of your health.

Get exercise every day. This is a healthy habit that improves energy, mood and self esteem.