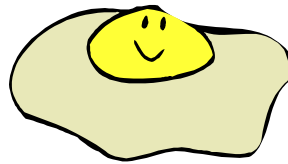


# LIVE LONGER WITH A HIGHER ALBUMIN

Prepared by ESRD  
Network of New  
England while under  
Contract with CMS.  
Contract  
#500-03-NW01

If your albumin level is greater than 4.0 research tells us that you will live longer! Albumin is a blood protein that measures whether you are eating enough protein. An albumin of 4.0 or higher helps digestion, healing and fights infection.



## EAT PROTEIN (Meat, Fish, & Poultry)

**Eggs** are the best protein you can eat. If your albumin is low, try eating at least 1-2 eggs every day! Don't worry about cholesterol-- raising your albumin is top priority! However, if you know your cholesterol is high, use some of the new lower cholesterol eggs, egg substitutes or egg whites (4 whites = 2 eggs).

### **Other great protein foods:**

**Chicken**

**Turkey**

**Beef**

**Fresh Pork**

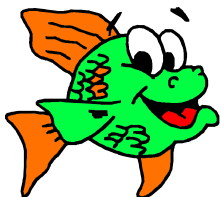
**Lamb**

**Fish-including canned tuna**

**Seafood**

**Veal**

**Cottage Cheese**



## HOW MUCH PROTEIN IS ENOUGH?

You need 8-12 ounces of protein each day! Because dialysis washes away blood protein, you need more than other people.

2 eggs = 2 ounce protein  
1 pork chop = 4 ounces  
1 chicken breast = 6 oz  
1 chicken leg = 2-3 ounce  
1 "quarter pound" burger  
= 3 oz.

6 ounce can tuna = 5 oz.  
1/2 cup cottage cheese = 2 oz.  
6 ounce can tuna = 6 oz.

*2 decks of cards is about the size  
of a 6 ounce serving.*

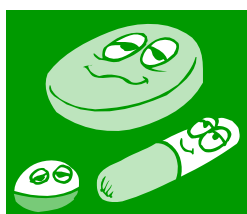
## WHAT IF I'M NEVER HUNGRY?



Poor appetite is often caused by many things; malnutrition, hospital stay, depression, medication, and if you are eating alone. The only way to fix it is to force yourself to eat! You must treat food like medicine! **YOU MUST EAT!** When you start eating better, your taste buds and appetite will return and food will start tasting good again.

## THINGS YOU CAN DO TO IMPROVE YOUR APPETITE

- Increase your activity level to improve your appetite.
- Eat several small meals and snacks throughout the day instead of eating just at mealtime.
- Snack on protein foods—egg salad, chicken salad, tuna salad with crackers.
- Get your FULL dialysis treatment. Good dialysis improves your appetite. (*Stay your whole treatment and don't skip treatments!*)
- Talk to your doctor and dietitian about your poor appetite.
- Write down what you eat for 3 days for your dietitian—she can give you ideas of ways to improve your diet.
- Take your renal vitamin. It replaces the vitamins washed away by dialysis.
- Spread your meals & snacks out—breakfast early, dinner late, lunch and snacks in between.
- Try high protein nutrition bars, canned nutrition drinks and protein powders. Ask your dietitian about the ones that would be best for you.



The original document was designed by Intermountain ESRD Network # 15, which has been modified and adapted by NW # 1 with permission .