Nutrition Guidelines for Carcinoid Patients

Gastrointestinal carcinoid tumors are a type of slow growing neuroendocrine tumor found in the lining of the stomach, small intestine, appendix, colon or rectum, and may cause nutritional problems. Carcinoid tumors can release extra hormones into your bloodstream that can cause carcinoid syndrome. Not everyone with carcinoid tumors will develop carcinoid syndrome.

Some symptoms of carcinoid syndrome may include:

- Flushing
- Diarrhea
- Abdominal Cramping
- Wheezing
- Pellagra (niacin deficiency)

Here is information on what may trigger carcinoid syndrome and tips to help you manage this problem.

Triggers for this syndrome can be:

- Large meals
- Alcohol
- Tomatoes
- Fatty Foods
- Drinks with caffeine
- Chocolate

This handout is for informational purposes only. Talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.

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• Spicy foods with pepper or cayenne
• Foods with amines (See list below)

Tips to help manage this problem:
• You should not eat or should limit the following foods that are high in amines:
  ▶ Aged cheeses (Cheddar, Camembert, Stilton)
  ▶ Alcoholic drinks
  ▶ Smoked, salted or pickled fish and meat (herring, salami, sausage, corned beef, bologna, pepperoni)
  ▶ Chicken, beef liver or liver pate
  ▶ Yeast extracts and Brewers yeast, hydrolyzed proteins
  ▶ Broad beans, sauerkraut, shrimp paste, some soybean products, miso soup, soy sauce, tofu
• You should not eat or should limit the following foods that are moderately high in amines:
  ▶ Drinks with caffeine (coffee in large amounts and soda)
  ▶ Chocolate (in large amounts)
  ▶ Some nuts (peanuts, coconuts, brazil nuts)
  ▶ Raspberries, bananas, avocados

Carcinoid patients without active symptoms of carcinoid syndrome can maintain their health and wellness by:
• Eating a plant-based diet/American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) guidelines (http://www.aicr.org/)
• Eating foods higher in protein and lower in fat
• Keeping a healthy body weight
• Doing physical activity each day
Niacin Deficiency

Digestive disorders can cause a person to not get enough niacin or to not absorb enough niacin.

Symptoms of niacin deficiency include:
- Diarrhea
- Thick scaly rash
- Swollen mouth
- Bright red tongue
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Depression
- Memory loss

You doctor may ask you to take a niacin supplement for this problem. If you need a niacin supplement, we suggest that you take the no-flush kind, called nicotinamide. Your doctor will give you directions for how to take this medicine.

Before using a supplement, your doctor may suggest that you try eating foods that are good sources of niacin such as:
- Lean meat, poultry, fish
- Whole and enriched grains and cereals
- Beans
- Nuts
- Vegetables

Always talk with your doctor or health care team if you have any questions about your care.