



the Foundation *for* Peripheral Neuropathy

Navigating Neuropathy with Nutrition

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Disclaimer

- This information is for educational purposes only.
- I am not a physician. Please check with your doctor or qualified health care provider before beginning any diet, lifestyle change or supplement regimens to confirm there are no contraindications.



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Also to note:

- Every patient that suffers from peripheral neuropathy has a unique experience.
- The cause of one's neuropathy plays a huge role!
 - Diabetes
 - Chemotherapy
 - Hereditary
 - Autoimmune
 - Idiopathic
 - And even Vitamin and Nutrition Deficiency, including **Vitamin B12**
- What are a patient's symptoms?
- There is currently no cure for neuropathy; however, a combination of treatments and lifestyle changes are prescribed to help manage symptoms.



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Neuropathy is a common side effect of certain medications, especially those used in chemotherapy to fight cancer.

Some of the drugs that may cause peripheral neuropathy include:

- ❖ Anti-alcohol drugs (Disulfiram)
- ❖ Anticonvulsants: Phenytoin (Dilantin®)
- ❖ Cancer medications (Cisplatin)
- ❖ Vincristine
- ❖ Heart or blood pressure medications (Amiodarone)
- ❖ Hydralazine
- ❖ Perhexiline
- ❖ Infection fighting drugs (Metronidazole, Flagyl®, Fluoroquinolones: Cipro®, Levaquin®)
- ❖ Nitrofurantoin
- ❖ Thalidomide
- ❖ INH (Isoniazid)
- ❖ Skin condition treatment drugs (Dapsone)



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CIPN Treatment & Therapy

(Not all treatments and therapies may be indicated.)

Therapies focus on treating the symptoms, including:

- ❖ Medications causing the neuropathy may be stopped or altered
- ❖ Over-the-counter pain medications for mild pain
- ❖ For severe pain, take over-the-counter pain medication or prescription drugs used for peripheral neuropathy, on a regular basis—rather than waiting until nighttime when symptoms can become more severe
- ❖ Antidepressants (for pain control)
- ❖ Take safety measures to compensate for loss of sensation
- ❖ Ask your doctor about special therapeutic shoes (which may be covered by Medicare and other insurance)
- ❖ Lifestyle changes – including diet and exercise!

Reference: The Foundation for Peripheral Neuropathy's website



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Nutrition: Omega-3 Fatty Acids



- Fish, flaxseeds, walnuts
- Supplements: 3:2 ratio of DHA:EPA
- Target 1000mg/day of Omega-3 Fatty acids (there may be excess bleed with higher doses)
- May help with nerve regeneration in type 1 diabetic neuropathy



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Nutrition: Fruits & Vegetables

- Fruits and vegetables - 5 servings/day
- Choose brightly-colored fruits and veggies
 - Ex: tomatoes, berries, broccoli, avocado, and spinach
- Berries = brain food
 - May function as a natural “Aricept”





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Nutrition: Gluten-Free Diet

- May be helpful for weight loss, metabolic syndrome, diabetes
- Some substitutes:
 - Brown rice
 - Quinoa
 - Teff
 - Buckwheat



A study published in *Muscle & Nerve* in Dec. 2006, found that patients who followed a gluten-free diet showed improvements in their neuropathy symptoms after one year.



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Nutrition

- Avoid/reduce alcohol intake
- Cut sugar, artificial sweeteners
- Reduce processed foods
 - If you can't pronounce it, don't buy it
- Eat what you can digest
 - Kale, cauliflower, lentils, beans, chickpeas
- Reduce dairy intake
- Conventional vs organic foods
 - Neonicotinoids
 - Neurologic effects



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Nutrition – Specific Diets

- Vegetarian diet + Exercise for diabetic PN
 - Improved pain in 17 of 21 SFN patients
- Low-fat, plant-based diet with B12 supplementation + weekly classes in diabetic PN (RCT)
 - Weight loss, reduced pain, improved electrical skin conductance (Sudoscans)
- Low Carbohydrate
- Ketogenic
- Anti-Inflammatory

Crane et al. J Nutr Med 1994;4:431-9
Bunner et al. Nutr Diabet 2015;15:e158
J Child Neurol. 2013 Aug; 28(8): 993–1001.
Brain & Life. June/July 2021.



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Thank You!

The Foundation *for* Peripheral Neuropathy is a 501(c)3 organization that is dedicated to improving the lives of patients living with peripheral neuropathy.

- Learn more at www.foundationforpn.org.
- Subscribe to our email distribution list.
- Questions? We're happy to help! Contact us at info@tffpn.org.



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Questions?