THE TUESDAY MINUTE

THIS WEEK'S TOPIC

Pre-& Post-Operative Nutrient Considerations

"Most patients are happy to invest in nutrients if it means fewer days in the hospital, reducing risk of infection or secondary disease & faster recovery."

This year over 45 million Americans will "go under the knife" for some type of surgical repair, major or minor. That's almost 1 out of 7. A Wellness clinician can be valuable to every one of these patients to reduce healing time and possible complications.

Let's look at the rationale as to why pre- and post-operative nutrients are essential. Think about the last time you visited someone in the hospital. Have you ever left a hospital feeling recharged or revitalized? Personally, I feel drained when I get back in my car. If that's the feeling the visitor gets, how about the patient? The stress, worry and anxiety are multiplied when you are the one going through a procedure.

My mom had a stroke about 6 years ago and in the same year my dad died of stomach cancer, so I still have some vivid memories about the experience. Confusion and stress were my first emotions. "Where to go, who to see, where is the doctor on call, has our doctor been called, what tests have been ordered, and what's taking so long." So right off the bat we can see a need to support the adrenal glands.

What are some of the other factors to consider? Many patients are depleted of vital nutrients before they get to the hospital which could be one of the reasons why they are there. While in the hospital, depending on the patient and quality of care, a patient's diet may still be deficient of nutrients. Also, we know patients will receive electrolyte fluids which have the potential of further depleting magnesium and possibly thiamine.

Keep in mind patients are injured by the surgical procedure itself. They also will need to detoxify the anesthesia drugs that are used to perform the testing or surgery. Commonly, a good night sleep is a rare commodity during a hospital stay. Nurses may be in and out, and lack of sleep can be an added stress.

If your immune system is compromised, in any hospital there are plenty of germs to go

around. Both stress and injury require an increased caloric need for adequate recovery and rehabilitation. Caloric need alone is increased by 30 - 50%.

For long term recovery, if adequate protein is not available glutamine will be stripped from the GI tract and used to maintain nitrogen balance. Displacing glutamine has been theorized to be a cause of leaky gut syndrome, which brings further complications.

Here's another consideration. How was the patient's nutrient status before the surgery? If they are elderly, I think we assume marginal. My point in all this discussion is that as clinicians we should be aggressive in promoting both pre- and post-operative nutrients. If we hear of someone going into surgery, we should schedule time to go over a program to reduce healing time and speed recovery. Let's put ourselves in our patient's shoes when we talk about these subjects. Not only does it show you care but I have found, "most patients are very happy to invest in nutrients if it means fewer days in the hospital, reducing risk of infection or secondary disease, and a faster recovery."

You can click below for a complete summary including nutrients, dosage, preventative blood tests and supplement timing. But here are the basics. Start building reserves right away by using an aggressive full spectrum multi-vitamin mineral formula like ProMulti-Plus. Many trace minerals and nutrients are needed for tissue repair and wound healing. ProMulti-Plus will provide the basic nutrients, trace minerals as well as the co-factors necessary for other nutrients to work more efficiently.

Vitamin C is one of the most important single nutrients; it is effective for any kind of stress and known for wound healing and healthy scar formation. However, large doses of vitamin C (over 1000 mg per day) should not be given 12-24 hours prior to surgery as it may interfere with anesthesia.

Also zinc is a critical pre- and post-nutrient. Zinc plays a role in wound healing through its effects on nucleic acid and protein synthesis and also enhances immune function. Because Western diets are borderline low in zinc, increased zinc is needed for tissue healing. If possible use the zinc taste test to assess and build compliance.

With all the research on EFAs, especially their ability to modulate pain, reduce inflammation and enhance immune function, it is prudent to use a mixture of organic Omega 3, 6, 9 oils like Optimal EFAs. And finally, perhaps the least applied is the use of proteolytic enzymes.

Most practitioners believe that proteolytic enzymes enhance the degradation of fibrin deposits, thereby improving drainage, facilitating the removal of damaged cells which allows oxygen and nutrients to reach the site of injury faster. Proteolytic enzymes when taken properly can reduce healing time by as much as 50%. Find out more about proteolytic enzymes in the article below.

Enzyme preparations are delicate as they can self digest. The preparations used by Biotics Research Corporation are second to none. Years ago, Biotics tested a bottle of Intenzyme Forte that exceeded the expiration date by 8 years. The activity of the enzymes still met label claim.

You'll find all these nutrients in my summary below. Use pre- and post-operative nutrients with patients now, or save the summary in your files for when you need it.

Thanks for reading this week’s edition. I'll see you again next Tuesday.

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