

# LOVE YOUR LIVER with GOOD NUTRITION

## Approach

To assist and support patients living with advanced liver disease to increase their knowledge regarding nutritional options within the custodial environment.

## Analysis

Patients diagnosed with advanced liver disease have specific dietary requirements that are difficult to fulfill within the custodial environment due to a variety of external factors. Providing patients with increased knowledge regarding their nutritional needs and the type of food and drink they should consume within this environment will assist in reducing the exacerbation of their liver disease and development of extra-hepatic manifestations.

Patients have access to set dietary plans that are provided to all custodial settings across the state. Patients are able to supplement their nutritional intake by purchasing from a Corrective Services pre-approved list of food items in what is known as a “buy-up”.

## Methods

The liver plays a significant role in the processing of food and the creation of energy reserves for the body to use when needed. This is why eating the correct food is so important, particularly for patients with advanced liver disease, where the liver may not be functioning correctly.

Written consumer education material was developed, providing guidance detailing the role of the liver, importance of good nutrition and specific strategies to optimise health through nutrition in custody.

The resource was consumer focus tested with **9 patients**, across **5 correctional facilities** in NSW.

## Results

**All patients (100%) reported that the resource was simple, easy to understand and visually appealing.**

The patients overwhelmingly reported the resource provided them with a greater understanding of the importance of good nutrition for their health.

After a 4 month interval the original focus group participants were approached regarding their knowledge retention and the continued use of the resource

### All patients (100%)

reported positive health outcomes by applying the knowledge gained from the nutrition resource:

**“I AM NOT AS BLOATED AS I USED TO BE AND HAVE LOST WEIGHT”**

### Some participants (30%)

reported that it was difficult to make healthy choices if they are unable to supplement their diet with buy-ups:

**“GUYS WHO CANNOT AFFORD BUY-UPS JUST HAVE TO MAKE DO WITH WHAT'S IN JAIL: BUY-UPS ARE EXPENSIVE”**

## Conclusions

- 1 This resource helps to support patients to make improved dietary decisions whilst in the custodial environment, as well as providing foundational knowledge that can be used when making healthier choices in the community.
- 2 Correctional facilities should provide a range of buy-up items that are affordable and nutritious.

### INITIAL FOCUS GROUP

**“I ALREADY EAT ALL THAT FOOD - GOOD TO KNOW IT IS THE RIGHT STUFF”**

**“GAVE ME A BETTER UNDERSTANDING OF WHAT I SHOULD EAT AND WHY”**

**“IT HAS ENCOURAGED ME TO READ THE FOOD LABELS AND MAKE CHANGES TO CHOICES”**

**“WE NEED OUR OWN DIET IN HERE FOR PEOPLE WITH BAD LIVERS”**

### Chronic liver disease and your diet

Patient information developed by Justice Health and Forensic Mental Health Network.

#### Role of your liver

- Removes toxins from your blood
- Stores nutrition from your food as glycogen (a source of energy)
- Helps with blood clots
- Produces hormones
- Removes bad things from your body and keeps you healthy.

#### What happens if you have chronic liver disease?

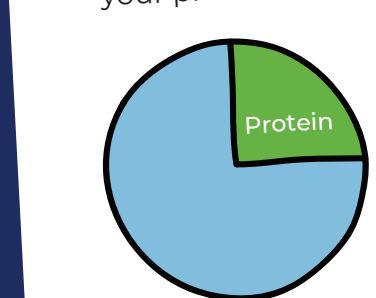
- Your liver cannot store and release glycogen.
- Your body breaks down fat and muscle to give you energy.
- You will lose muscle and body fat.

#### Tips to prevent muscle and weight loss

##### Add some protein to all of your meals.

Examples of good protein options are: chicken, fish, beef, eggs, beans, milk.

They should make up at least 1/4 of your plate.



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##### Eat high energy and high protein snacks between meals.

Examples of high protein snacks are: yoghurt, cheese and biscuits, or a handful of nuts.

Your doctor may prescribe supplement drinks to increase your protein.

##### Avoid long periods of not eating.

Avoid not eating for more than 12 hours.

Have 6-8 small meals throughout the day.

Eat a high protein snack before bed like Up&Go Energiser.

Eat good breakfast when you wake up.



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### Examples of good quality protein

- Chicken breast = 12g protein
- 2 eggs = 12g protein
- 1 cup milk = 8g protein
- 1 carton Up&Go = 8.3g protein

#### good quality protein in my diet (list below):

Weight loss may not be noticeable. It can cause fluid to swell in your stomach, legs and feet. and body fat, whilst holding onto fluid, means your weight (sodium) helps to prevent or reduce holding up fluid.

#### Food labels?

Food labels can be confusing and tricky to understand. Here are a few quick tips to choose the better options when living with liver disease.

What to look for:  
1. Go to the per 100g column on the right side  
2. Look at Protein  
3. Look at Sodium (Salt)

Aim for 12-15g of protein for every 1kg of your body weight per day.  
My Protein Aim: \_\_\_\_\_ g per day  
Sodium Target: less than 2000mg per day  
• Avoid: over 400mg per 100g  
• Ok: 120mg - 400mg per 100g  
• Best Choice: 120mg or under per 100g

### FOLLOW-UP FOCUS GROUP

**“I AM NOT AS BLOATED AS I USED TO BE AND HAVE LOST WEIGHT”**

Patient lost 10 kgs

**“A HEALTHY DIET MEANS A HEALTHY LIVER. HELPS ME LIVE LONGER”**

Patient lost 4 kgs

**“GUYS WHO CANNOT AFFORD BUY-UPS JUST HAVE TO MAKE DO WITH WHAT'S IN JAIL: BUY-UPS ARE EXPENSIVE”**

**“I USED THIS RESOURCE. I STOPPED EATING CANNED SOUP, VEGEMITE, FISH SAUCE. REDUCED SALT INTAKE AS A RESULT. REDUCED NOODLES FROM 5 PACKETS TO 1 PACKET/DAY”**

Patient lost 6 kgs



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### Disclosure of Interest Statement:

Nil disclosure of interest to declare.