

Wilson's Disease

Wilson's disease is a hereditary disorder in which the body retains too much copper. Copper is a trace mineral in the body. This means it is essential for good health, but only a tiny amount is needed. When excess copper accumulates, it is stored in the eyes, brain, kidneys, and liver. Excess copper collecting in the liver causes cirrhosis of the liver, which is a serious, life-threatening condition. However, Wilson's disease is treatable.

Copper is found in different amounts in a wide variety of foods. Therefore, dietary restriction alone is usually not enough to control Wilson's disease. Medicines such as Cuprime and Depen (generic name: D-penicillamine) and Syprine (generic name: trientine) are used to help excrete excess copper with the urine. Still, it is helpful to avoid copper-rich foods as much as possible. The dietary intake of copper should be less than 1.0 mg per day.

A low copper diet is generally adequate in all the nutrients necessary for good health. However, patients taking D-penicillamine may develop a deficiency of vitamin B-6 (pyridoxine), and the physician may prescribe a supplement of 25 mg daily.

Food Groups			
	Eat as Desired Foods low in copper -- less than 0.1 mg/portion.	6 Portions/Day	Avoid
Meat & meat substitute	beef; eggs; white meat turkey and chicken; cold cuts and frankfurters that do not contain pork, dark turkey, dark chicken, or organ meats; all others not listed on high or moderate list	all fish except shellfish 3 oz, dark meat turkey and chicken 3 oz, peanut butter 2 Tbsp	lamb; pork; pheasant quail; duck; goose; squid; salmon; organ meats including liver, heart, kidney, brain; shellfish including oysters, scallops, shrimp, lobster, clams, and crab; meat gelatin; soy protein meat substitutes; tofu; nuts and seeds
Vegetables	most vegetables including fresh tomatoes	bean sprouts 1 cup; beets 1/2 cup; spinach 1/2 cup cooked, 1 cup raw; tomato juice and other tomato products 1/2 cup; broccoli 1/2 cup; asparagus 1/2 cup	vegetable juice cocktail, mushrooms
Fruits	most fruits except as listed to right Fruits dried at home are permitted	mango 1/2 cup, papaya 1/4 average, pear 1 medium, pineapple 1/2 cup	nectarine, commercially dried fruits including raisins, dates, prunes; avocado
Starches - breads & grains	breads & pasta from refined flour, rice, regular oatmeal, cereals with <0.1 mg of copper per serving (check sweet	whole wheat bread 1 slice, Melba toast 4, whole wheat crackers 6, instant oatmeal 1/2 cup, instant Ralston™ 1/2 cup, cereals with 0.1 to 0.2 mg of copper per	dried beans including soy beans, lima beans, baked beans, garbanzo beans, pinto beans; dried peas; lentils; millet; barley; wheat germ; bran breads and

	potatoes, all others not listed on high or moderate list	serving (check label), dehydrated and canned soups 1 cup, potatoes in any form 1/2 cup or small, pumpkin 3/4 cup, parsnips 2/3 cup, winter and summer squash 1/2 cup, green peas 1/2 cup	cereals; cereals with >0.2 mg of copper per serving (check label); soy flour; soy grits; fresh sweet potatoes
Fats, oils	butter, cream, margarine, mayonnaise, non-dairy creamer, sour cream, oils, salad dressings (made from allowed ingredients)	olives 2 med	
Milk & milk products	Most milk products, milk flavored with carob, cheeses, cottage cheese	all others	chocolate milk, soy milk, cocoa
Sweets & desserts	most sweets; jams, jellies, and candies made with allowed ingredients; carob; flavoring extracts	licorice 1 oz, syrups 1 oz	desserts that contain high amounts of ingredients rich in copper; candy with nuts, chocolate, or cocoa
Beverages, liquids, misc.	coffee, tea, fruit juices, fruit-flavored beverages, lemonade, soups made with allowed ingredients	Postum™ and other cereal beverages 1 cup, carbonated beverages 12 oz, ketchup 2 Tbsp, dehydrated and canned soups	instant breakfast beverages, mineral water, soy-based beverages, copper-fortified formulas, brewer's yeast, multiple vitamins with copper or minerals

Sample Menu

Breakfast	Lunch	Dinner
grapefruit 1/2 cup scrambled egg 1 white toast 1 slice margarine 1 tsp skim milk 1/2 cup coffee 1 cup salt/pepper	white bread 2 slices roast beef 2 oz lettuce tomato mayonnaise 1 Tbsp carrot sticks 6 fresh orange 1 skim milk 1/2 cup	chicken breast 3 oz rice 1/2 cup green beans 1/2 cup margarine 1 tsp white bread 1 slice jelly 1 tsp apple 1 lemonade 1 cup salt/pepper

