



WII Nutrition: Message for the Commanding Officer

Eat Right, Ready to Fight

The meaning behind “Eat Right, Ready to Fight” encompasses the battles a wounded, ill or injured (WII) individual might face related to nutrition and healing. These service men and women are waging war on a plethora of injuries and illnesses, including depression, cancer, burns, severe head, neck and shoulder injuries, etc. Proper nutrition and hydration are powerful weapons in fighting illness and recovering from mental, physical, and emotional wounds. Research reveals important factors related to healing and nutrition for WII service members. First, adequate protein, hydration, zinc and vitamins A and C, are critical in the healing process. Second, the WII population may not be getting the nutrients they need to make the best recovery possible.

Dietitians and clinicians manage the nutrition intake of WII service members to optimize recovery while they are under clinical care; however, the service members are not necessarily equipped with the knowledge and tools they need to maintain healthy eating habits after they leave clinical care.¹

It is important for the WII population to know the nutrients that aid recovery, what foods contain those nutrients, and how to prepare meals using those foods. This will help ensure recovering service members eat right for optimal healing and recovery.

What Can Leadership Do?

- Promote awareness of adequate protein, hydration and healing nutrients: Vitamins A & C, and Zinc, which is the focus of our [Healing Nutrients Fact Sheet](#)
- Promote the use of healing nutrients by using the [Making Meals that Heal Guide](#)
- Encourage WII members to seek nutritional advice from their doctor or dietitian for their specific wound, illness or injury

Resources

1. Kieffer A, Cole R. Weight change, lifestyle, and dietary behavior in the US military's Warrior in Transition Units. *US Army Medical Department Journal*. October - December 2012:6-13.