Eat Foods that Heal the Liver

January 27, 2015 By Karen Hoyt

Karen Hoyt is a blogger who has a story about hepatitis C, cirrhosis, end-stage liver disease, and liver cancer. This excerpt from Karen's blog is but an appetizer...

When I think of malnutrition, I'm picturing those sad television commercials in underdeveloped countries. I've learned that **people like you are me may be starving to death.** With liver disease, it is more common than you would think. I am a curious girl and have been all over this subject since I was diagnosed with hepatitis C and cirrhosis. There are reasons why those of us with liver disease do not get enough nourishment. **There are also ways to make sure that we eat foods that heal our liver.**

Poor diet - Think about all the dietary restrictions we have placed on us with liver disease. It's no wonder some of us are starving! Our typical day of eating has us chanting this list as if our life depended on it.

- Don't overeat!
- Keep it low sodium!
- Too much protein will make you loony!
- Watch out for sugars!
- Eat something every few hours!

Of course, we know why we have all the Food Rules: The liver is the main organ that stores and processes everything we eat. When it is under attack by the Hepatitis C Virus, or damaged by Cirrhosis, it has a hard time performing. Unfortunately, it can also create a situation where we do not eat enough to get all of our nutrients and fuel. It's the truth, but most days it sucks. It only makes sense that eating the right foods - at the right time - can take some of the burden off of our liver.

Which makes me wonder: Can your diet be too healthy? *That just sounds wrong.* But, after my diagnosis, I almost quit eating altogether. I was afraid of eating. I mean, what if I ate something that would make me even sicker than I was? A ham sandwich could mean the end of me! I eyed turkey bacon and eggs with suspicion as if they could land me back in the hospital with ascites again. I have figured out a system, but in the meantime, I ate very little.

Honestly, oatmeal and toast were my main source of food. **I was skinny as a rail. Nibbling nuts and yogurt all day really called my sanity into question on the job.** I never ate lunch with the other teachers. I sat alone in my classroom and napped after snacking on almond butter and honey on whole wheat.

One morning while I was on hepatitis C treatment, I was running late for an early teachers meeting. Plopping my wig on in the parking lot, I hurried toward the library and saw that almost everyone was seated. On my way to sit down, I spotted the tables loaded with white square boxes filled with soft round donuts. It was an assortment! My blood sugar was low, my hemoglobin was low, and my ego was low - maybe because my hair was falling out in clumps?

All I knew is that **I wanted a donut so bad** that I was willing to go to the front of the room with all eyes on me to get one. I made a run for it and raced down the line, opening box after box until I spotted the object of my desire - a deep fried circle of raspberry filled pastry covered in a thick glaze of shimmering sugar.

I glanced up and saw the vice principal as he walked my way. Maybe he wanted to help me find a seat and get on with the meeting? Maybe my wig was on sideways? Perhaps my slip was showing. Everyone knew that I did not eat sugar. I had avoided the desert table at every single event. Even the pastries at our department meetings couldn't tempt me. I would whip out my granola bar with nary a glance at the plate of glucose, fat, and sodium.

But not on this day. Today was different. I was a woman whose appetite had been held down for too long. I wanted that donut.

To read this entire blog entry and find out if Karen got her donut, click on IHelpC.com. You will also find some healthy eating tips there.

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