

BREATHE EASY North Staffordshire Newsletter: Aug 2023

Summary of our Rudyard Lake outing, 4th August

Welcome

We were 15 at the Lake this trip, including two guests (Patricia with Steve and Jessica with Mary) and our Kelly from MPFT. *Apologies from the Sims and Linda S (unfortunately unwell).*



A really nice buffet (with teas/coffees, biscuits and cakes too!) was followed by a boat tour on the new all electric “SunRay” boat. It was quite strange with the boat being so silent on the water! Ray Perry (the Rudyard Lake Ranger) gave us lots of interesting stories about the lake from invading minks to a red Porsche driving minx (!), from amphibian tanks practicing for D Day to Carlos Trower tightrope walking over the lake in the days when Rudyard was considered the “Blackpool of the Potteries”. Even the weather was good for us! A lovely relaxing day out! 😊

Planning 2023:

2023	Main Event	Other Topic(s)	Notes
September	Air Quality		
October	Pharmacy Services	-	
November	COPD Awareness		
December	Xmas Lunch		

Next Get-Together: Friday 1st Sept at Tesco Community Room

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ANNEXE :

NUTRICIA responses to our questions (from July)



Aging:

1) You mention that the necessary levels of protein, Vitamin D and Calcium increase with age but also due to COPD (to help prevent infections).

What are the guidelines for how much a) for COPD and b) as you age, compared to “normal” levels?

Your individual nutritional requirements will vary from person to person, please speak to a healthcare professional if you are concerned on your specific nutritional requirements.

Underweight:

2) You mention taking Ready Meals to help ensure you eat enough when underweight. Are these always “balanced” nutritionally? There is a lot of press against “ultra-processed” foods and this tends to include ready meals. Are there any specific sources/brands of GOOD vs BAD ready meals?

The session mentioned having meals ready to eat, not ‘ready meals’.

3) Oral Nutritional Supplements: In general, should these be in addition to, or a substitution of, meals?

Are they a fully balanced substitute for meals? (They are very filling and so difficult as an “addition” to meals ...) (*In the group we have experience of the “Ensure” product.*)

The use of Oral Nutritional Supplements should be under healthcare professional supervision, therefore they will be best placed to advise on your individual nutritional requirements.

Overweight:

4) A lot of “diet” products include sweeteners such as Aspartame. Again, there is a lot of press (Eg Panorama recently) that highlights the dangers of such sweeteners. What comments do you have on this?

Are there recommended “good” sweeteners and identified “bad” ones?

Unfortunately we are not in a position to give advice on products which are not in our portfolio.

COPD specific dietary advice:

5) Symptoms of COPD are often due to inflammation. We read often that we should therefore be taking lots of anti-inflammatory foods/supplements to help prevent/relieve these symptoms. Do you have any advice on this?

One key example is Omega 3 (and the balance with Omega 6, which we generally have too much of). Another example is turmeric powder. Is there any professional advice on this topic that might be helpful for us?

Should we be taking more than the average “healthy” person?

Your individual nutritional requirements will vary from person to person, please speak to a healthcare professional if you are concerned on your specific nutritional requirements.

6) It is suggested that COPD might be caused by excess oxidation not being controlled by our bodies. So again we read that we should be taking lots of antioxidants to slow the progress of the disease. As above, do you have any comments/guidelines here? Should we be taking more?

Please see above

7) Following on from the above reflections, it means that COPD sufferers might need to be even more aware of foods that might be inflammatory or cause oxidative stress (compared to healthier people). These might include Dairy, Red Meats and refined foods. Do you have any comments on this? Should we look to being more vegetarian/pescatarian?

We would advise speaking to a healthcare professional if you are concerned on your specific nutritional requirements, as will be able to counter in specific requirement e.g. cultural.

8) In particular, there have been research articles suggesting that the “Prudent” diet is beneficial for COPD sufferers (i.e. high fruit and vegetables, oily fish and wholemeal carbs together with a little wine ☺). Do you have any comments on this?

Unfortunately we are not able to give individualised dietary advice. We would advise speaking to a healthcare professional if you are concerned on your specific nutritional requirements.

8) Do you think that there is any case for “topping up” our diets with vitamin/mineral supplements to guarantee that our bodies were as well armed as possible to help manage the disease?

Typically our Doctors don't make any recommendation to do so. Is this because there is actually no “official” good nutritional advice to do so or because Doctors aren't specifically trained in this area?

Dietitians are healthcare professionals who are experts in diet and nutrition. If you are concerned on your specific nutritional requirements, you can ask to be referred to a dietitian by your GP.

Individual vs General advice:

9) It is often said that the best advice, especially on diet, is when it is individual to you. Do you agree? Where are the good sources of advice that can be individualised by each of us (preferable free advice)?

What should we be noting/measuring to help know what could be individualised? For example NHS apps or food tracking apps (Chronometer) etc

Unfortunately we are not able to give individualised dietary advice. We would advise speaking to a healthcare professional if you are concerned on your specific nutritional requirements.