What is good nutrition
The balance of good health

8 recommended top tips
(British Nutrition Foundation)

- Base meals on starchy carbohydrates
- Eat at least 5 portions of fruit & veg per day
- Aim for two portions of fish
  1 portion should be oily
- Cut down on saturated fat & sugar
- Eat less salt (less than 6g per day)
- Keep hydrated 6-8 glasses of fluid per day
- Don’t skip breakfast
What are the issues of people with PoTS?

- Good Hydration
- High salt intake
- Gastro-intestinal disturbances
- Dysphagia
- Gluten intolerance
- Low histamine diet
- The top tips for PoTS

You are what you eat - a guide to healthy eating for patients with vasovagal syncope and PoTS

This information sheet has been designed for patients and carers to provide information and advice on their diet when suffering from syncope or PoTS.

Blood pressure and pulse rate can be influenced by what we consume. Therefore changes can be quite dramatic in a patient with vasovagal syncope or postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome (PoTS). This can work to the advantage or disadvantage of the patient.

Fluids

It has long been recommended that patients who are dehydrated are prone to fainting. When fluid intake is insufficient, or fluid loss is excessive, the volume of blood circulating in blood vessels becomes reduced and blood pressure falls. An average healthy adult requires at least 2-3 litres of fluid daily. When exercising in a hot environment, considerably more may be needed.

Patients with PoTS are often hypovolemic. The mean arterial blood pressure is reduced. In relation to the capacity of the blood vessels, blood loss has a temporary peak (Bouchard’s pulse) followed by a delayed fall in blood pressure. Reduced blood volume can lead to syncopal episodes. Patients with vasovagal syncope often also experience dizziness and other symptoms.

Ensure adequate fluid intake throughout the day. Fluid intake of at least 2 litres per day is generally recommended and more is necessary on a hot day or if exercising. It is probably been been your fluid intake event before you faint.

Marketers use fluid to help improve their drink from a regular soft drink. This allows you to keep track of how much you have consumed and if it is easy to understand the effect. This is very useful. Young patients are often advised to drink sufficient fluids that they do not feel thirsty.

Alcohol

It is important to maintain adequate consumption of alcohol-free beverages.

Unscented hand sanitiser and pre-moistened wipes contain alcohol. One glass of wine has the same effect as a glass of water. Some patients find it useful to drink pre-moistened chocolate or vanilla-flavoured drinks containing monosodium and glucose which may help in dealing with symptoms. Alternatively, paracetamol and tablets may be purchased from most chemists and mobile pharmacies. These are decision in water.

Reduced fluid intake (dehydration): In patients without presyncopal symptoms, dehydration may contribute to the development of vasovagal syncope. It is also important to understand that the patient may have been administered and improving the oral fluid intake.

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A guide to healthy eating for patients with vasovagal syncope and PoTS

PoTS

Salt: Patients with a tendency to low blood pressure and syncope are often advised to increase sodium intake. PoTS patients (except hypotensive PoTS) may also benefit. A self-helping healthcare professional may provide you with a dietary assessment. You are recommended to drink one litre of fluid before you faint.

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Good Hydration
Aim 3 litres of fluid daily (urine runs clear)

- Studies show water drinking improves ability to stand, less fainting & improves “brain fog”
- 70% of people with PoTS have reduced blood volume – 13% reduction
- PoTS intolerance to standing due to blood pooling
- Receptors in the legs gives feedback to the heart to increase heart rate & drop blood pressure
- Studies in ½ L. fluid & soup over 5 mins = improved symptoms, standing, blood pressure maintained & reduced heart rate (from 123 to 108).
- Drink more in the morning – “front load”
- Isotonic drinks have the same osmotic pressure as body fluids: provide energy
Alcohol, Caffeine & Energy drinks

- Avoid Alcohol
  - Causes fainting in healthy people
  - Evidence: blunts normal muscle & blood vessel response to standing, & drops blood pressure
  - Strong diuretic – makes you wee

- Caffeine
  - No clear evidence: avoid & see if symptoms improve, limit intake
  - Avoid in hyperadrenergic PoTS: level of natural stimulants are high

- Energy & soda Drinks
  - AVOID completely
  - Energy drinks have caffeine & Gurana (stimulant contains twice caffeine found in coffee beans)
  - Case study Red Bull caused PoTS
Increase Salt
Aim: 5-10 grams / day

Check with your Doctor
- High blood pressure, heart or kidney disease need to avoid salt
- Migraines estimated in 27% of people with PoTS – high salt diet associated with reduced migraines
- Salt helps the body retain fluids and the blood vessels to tighten
- Studies have shown high salt intake in PoTS, expands blood plasma volume, adrenaline was lower, improved symptoms & reduced standing heart rate (9-13 beats per minute)
- Hyperadrenergic PoTS possibly do not benefit from salt increase
- Tip: have your own salt shaker at meal times
- Foods high in Salt
  - Canned Soups
  - Stock cubes
  - Salted nuts
  - Smoked / cured / canned beans with salt
Little & Often
Small meals, Low Carbohydrates

Worsening of orthostatic symptoms after food
- Post prandial (after eating) syncope
- After eating Increased blood flow to the digestive system
- In PoTS there is already problem with blood pooling
- Eating diverts more blood for digestion
- Studies shows carbohydrates lowers blood pressure in orthostatic intolerance
- Autonomic dysfunction affects GI – in PoTS delayed gastric emptying
- 1 study in PoTS found increase in heart rate & drop in blood pressure following a liquid meal
- 1 study drinking ½ L water before a meal reduced post prandial syncope
- Gastrointestinal issues & difficulty swallowing consider soft diet, sitting up
Gluten free diet for Gluten Intolerance/ Coeliac disease

- Coeliac disease is an immune mediated small bowel disease affecting about 1%
- Coeliac symptoms include abdominal pain, bloating & diarrhea
- 100 PoTS screened for coeliac disease – 4% had coeliac disease
- 15-40% people with PoTS report: nausea, bloating, abdominal pain, constipation & diarrhea
- Blood test diagnoses Coeliac disease
- Gluten Free diet excludes foods containing gluten (wheat, barley, rye, oat and related grains)
- Gluten free alternatives
Low-histamine diet
Mast Cell Activation Disorder

Flavanoids have an important role
- Found in fruit & veg: contain anti-inflammatory & immune benefits
- Found to reduce Brain fog in a number of conditions

GENERAL RULES
- fermented foods
- cured foods
- dyes
- preservatives / additives
- Sulphites (preservative)
- refrigerated leftovers
- alcohol
Eating healthy & healthy weight

- Health at any size
- Body mass index traditionally used: does not account for muscle mass or healthy eating
- Underweight unhealthy as is overweight
  - Depression
  - Anaemia
  - Tiredness
  - Low immunity
- Need energy for exercise, mood stabilizer
- Focus on eating healthy rather than weight
Preparing Meals & Cooking Tips

- Sit down whilst preparing food
- On a good day cook larger batches and freeze
- Use energy saving device (slow cookers / electric chopper)
- Plan & Pace yourself
- Stick to a routine
- Get someone else to do the washing up
Deliciously Ella
WITH VANILLA’S FRIENDS
By Alexis McLaren

Too often, when we want to be healthy, it can leave us feeling deprived and feeling like we can’t socialise. But Ella Mills wanted to prove just the opposite could happen.

Back in 2011, Ella was diagnosed with a condition called Postural Tachycardia Syndrome, which affected her autonomic nervous system and left her mostly bedbound, struggling with a whole host of physical symptoms she couldn’t control – her heart rate, blood pressure, digestion, circulation, immune system and lots more. Ella also really struggled with depression and felt isolated from those around her.

With the hope to help manage some of her symptoms, Ella became interested in the power of diet and lifestyle, and began exploring that area and learning to cook – and at the same time began documenting her journey on a blog: deliciouslyella.com

Within two years Ella had managed to stabilise her condition using a whole foods, plant-based diet, alongside an exercise program from her doctor and help from a nutritionist.

For Ella it has been a crazy few years – challenging but incredible. We all know we should eat our five a day, and Ella has now given people a way of doing this in a way that they love and that they’re excited to share with their friends and family.

Tops Tips
Pay attention to the simple things – everything counts

► 2-3 Litres of fluid - front loaded
► Up to 10 grams salt (medical advised)
► Eat small portions often
► Low carbohydrate foods
► High in fruit / veg / nuts /seeds
► Try different foods – see if they work
► Everyone is different – find your triggers