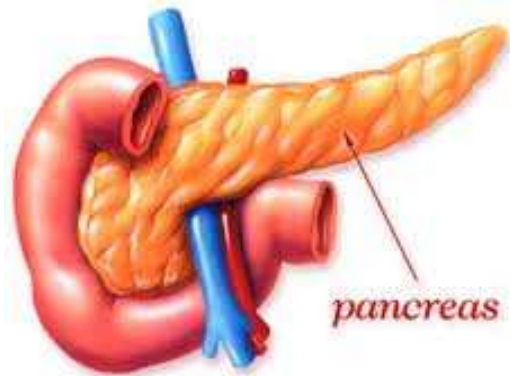


# PANCREATITIS

Global Nutrition Services, LLC

**The pancreas is an important organ in the body that secretes substances such as digestive enzymes, insulin and glucagon. When the pancreas becomes inflamed, a condition known as pancreatitis occurs. Pancreatitis is characterized by edema, autodigestion, fat necrosis, and hemorrhage of the pancreatic tissue. There are two types of pancreatitis: acute or chronic.**



## Acute Pancreatitis

Most cases of acute pancreatitis are due to passing gallstones that become stuck in the digestive track. Alcohol is another cause of acute pancreatitis, as well as hypertriglyceridemia, making people who consume alcohol and persons with hypertriglyceridemia most likely to develop acute pancreatitis. Symptoms include upper abdominal pain, generally worsening with ingestion of food. Other symptoms are nausea, vomiting, abdominal distention and steatorrhea.

## Chronic Pancreatitis

Chronic pancreatitis is due to irreversible damage to the pancreas due to repeated inflammation. In the US, alcoholism is the most common cause of chronic pancreatitis in adults and cystic fibrosis is the most common cause for children. It is believed that genetic defects may also have a role in chronic pancreatitis. Signs and symptoms include chronic abdominal pain and possible elevated pancreatic enzyme levels. Diabetes and steatorrhea may develop as well.

## **NUTRITION INTERVENTION**

### Acute Phase

- Usually no oral intake for 3 or more days
- Advance diet to clear liquids when able to tolerate food
- If NPO > 5 days, consider nutritional support
  - Tube Feeding: Elemental formula with medium chain triglycerides (i.e. Peptamen)
  - TPN: Lipid emulsion only if triglycerides are less than 400 mg/dL
- When solid food is tolerated, advance to low fat, caffeine free, no alcohol, 6 small meals

### Chronic Phase

- Restrict alcohol and caffeine
- Increase fat in the diet as tolerated
- Restrict fat to 50-60 grams per day if steatorrhea occurs
- High protein, high calorie diet if underweight
- Consider pancreatic enzyme replacement if there is difficulty tolerating solid foods
- Frequent small meals have been shown to be better tolerated