



# Eating And Nutrition

Good nutrition is an important part of any healthy lifestyle, but a cancer diagnosis can make keeping a healthy diet and proper eating habits difficult.

Depending on the type of treatment, you may have various side effects like nausea, fatigue, vomiting, loss of appetite, depression, stress and others. These side effects can impact

It is not unusual to only remember physical symptoms (like nausea) because they are most evident obvious to you and those around you. However, it is important to take notice of any emotional or practical factors that might affect your appetite as they too are important. Though it is easier said than done, eating properly and understanding how your nutrition affects your cancer experience can make a difference during treatment and recovery. Your nutrition is an important part of your cancer treatment and may be one of the only things about your body and cancer experience you have control of. Below are some tips for you and your family to help you better manage your eating and nutrition.

For the patient:

- **Talk to your health providers.** Always talk about any concerns and questions about diet that you might have whether they're physical practical or emotional. Everyone's cancer experience, food preference and lifestyles are different so it is important to have a nutritional plan tailored to your needs and wants.
- **Voice your Opinion about your food.** Your ability to eat often may decrease due to the side effects of treatment, so it's important to eat health but also eat things that you enjoy.
- **Eat when and where you are comfortable.** If there is a specific place or spaces that might make it easier or more pleasant try to go to those areas during meal times as much as possible. Your appetite might vary from those of your family members, which might make your meal times different from your family members. Ask family to sit with you or adjust family meal time so that you don't always have to eat alone.
- **Keep a Journal.** A journal is not only essential to keeping track of your other signs and symptoms, but it is a great tool assist in the tracking of your diet. It assists your family members in keeping up with your eating schedule and preferences, and It will allow you to correlate any changes you have in your diet with new treatment, physical or psychosocial changes.

For the family/caregiver:

- **Avoid power struggles.** Do not criticize eating habits. Encourage you loved one to eat anytime they feel up to eating. Try not to insist if they say they are unable to eat.
- **Be supportive in social settings.** Food and eating is a large part of social activities, which might be hard for your loved ones. So understand that they may eat more during social activities or may want to avoid these settings if eating is difficult.
- **Allow them independence.** You want to be supportive and assist the patient in any way you can, but sometimes you might over step and take away their independence. Encourage them to make

their own meals when they feel up to it, it's a good chance for them to feel like they can still do certain things on their own.

- **Give friendly reminders.** Sometimes your loved one may forget to eat or may skip meals, because they have so many other things on their minds. It's okay to give a reminder, but never force food on them.
- **Always communicate.** It can become easy to forget how your loved one is feeling, because they aren't always stating it. Be supportive in allowing them to express their feelings when they feel comfortable. Mood and emotional well-being play a part in appetite as well.

The following is a list of recommended nutrient rich foods:

- Citrus Fruits - 1 medium orange, 1 medium tangerine, or 1/2 a cup of their juices per day.
- Colorful Vegetables - 1 cup eaten 2-3 times per day is ideal. Reach for sweet potatoes, spinach, squash and pumpkin.
- Cruciferous Vegetables - 1 cup serving at least 3 times per week is ideal. Reach for broccoli, Brussel sprouts, cabbage, cauliflower and kale.
- Fish - 3-6 oz. servings 2-3 times per week is ideal (but no more than 12 oz. per week). Fish also helps to keep cholesterol and blood pressure within normal ranges. Choose sardines, herring, anchovies, wild salmon, canned salmon, light canned tuna, black cod and striped bass. There are some contaminants in fish, so reduce them by removing their skin and fat before cooking.
- Flaxseed - gradually working up to 2 tbs per day may lower hormone levels. Use flaxseed or flaxmeal and store it in the refrigerator or freezer.
- Legumes - 1/2 cup eaten 4-5 times per day may protect against DNA damage.
- Yogurt - 1/2 cup serving per day provides probiotics (healthy bacteria that can boost immunity), in addition to calcium and protein.
- Tea (green, black, white or oolong teas) - Please consult with your doctor before drinking. 2-3 cups each day can neutralize harmful free radicals.

For more information, please ask to speak to a nutritionist.