

Healthy Eating

Effects of Cancer Treatment: Healthy Eating

Everyone should eat healthy food, including people getting cancer treatment. You should eat foods that are high in protein and calories before, during, and after your treatment. This will help you heal, feel better, and stay strong.

Your doctor or nurse may send you to a dietitian who has been trained to work with people who have cancer and can suggest healthy foods for you. They can also help you to cope with weight loss, not wanting to eat, or other nutrition related problems.

What are high protein and high calorie foods?

Some high protein foods are eggs, cheese, dairy products, meat, poultry, fish, meat alternatives, nuts, seeds, nut butters, tofu, and dried peas and beans.

Some foods that are high in calories are muffins, puddings, dried fruit, granola, sandwiches, ice cream, avocado, milkshakes and full fat yogurt.

What other kinds of food should I eat?

When you plan your meals and snacks, choose foods from the 4 main groups from Canada's Food Guide to Healthy Eating.

The four main food groups are:

- Fruits and vegetables
- Poultry, fish, meat, and meat alternatives
- Cereals, breads, and pasta (grain products)
- Milk and milk products

How can I make healthy eating part of my life?

- Try to eat a healthy breakfast. Many people feel more like eating in the morning.

What are your questions? Please ask.

We are here to help you.

- Try to eat many small meals and snacks during the day.
- Keep healthy snacks handy.
- Eat when you are most hungry.
- Cook foods that you like, so that you will want to eat.
- Plan meals ahead. Try cooking a large meal and breaking it up into 4 or 5 portions that you can put in the freezer. This will save you from cooking every day.
- Accept offers from family and friends to shop for you or make meals.
- Find out if you can get home delivery of meals, such as Meals on Wheels.
- Drink at least 8 glasses of liquid a day, such as milk, juice, soup, milkshakes, and/or eggnog.
- Keep in mind that eating well is very important during your treatment. If you don't feel like eating, try walking before meals to make yourself hungrier.

Questions to ask your health care team

Do you think I should meet with a dietitian?

Should I take vitamins or supplements?

Are there any special foods that I should eat?

Are there any foods that I should not eat?

Is it okay if I drink beer, wine or liquor?

What if I lose or gain weight during treatment?

Looking for more information on this topic?

You can contact the Canadian Cancer Society at www.cancer.ca or call the Cancer Information Service of the Cancer Society at 1-888-939-3333. You can also contact your local public library for books, videos, magazine articles and online health information. For a list of public libraries in Nova Scotia go to <http://publiclibraries.ns.ca>.

For more information visit the Nova Scotia Cancer Care Program website www.nscancercare.ca

Patient and family feedback is very important to us.

We would like to invite you to send any comments or suggestions on how to improve this booklet to education.cancercare@nshealth.ca or feel free to call us at 1-866-599-2267.

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This pamphlet is for educational purposes only.

It is not intended to replace the advice or professional judgment of a health care provider.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider.