

# 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 side effects like nausea, fatigue, vomiting, loss of appetite, depression, stress and others. These side effects can impact your treatment course and your quality of life. If you are concerned about side effects that are impacting eating and overall nutrition, please talk to your doctor or dietitian for assistance.

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. Below are some tips for you and your family to help you better manage your eating and nutrition.

**Talk to your health providers.** Please talk about any concerns and questions about diet that you might have whether physical practical or emotional concerns. 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 desire to eat may decrease due to the side effects of cancer treatment, so can be important to eat healthy, but also eat things that you enjoy.

**Eat when and where you are comfortable.** If there is a specific place in your home that might make eating 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 a family member 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 symptoms, but it is a great tool to assist in the tracking of your diet. This can help you and your family keep up with your eating schedule and preferences. It might also help you to connect any changes you have in your diet with new treatment, physical or emotional changes.

**Talk to a Registered Dietitian.** Your cancer center or doctor will most likely have a registered dietitian who can sit down with you and help you create an eating plan that works best for you. Beware of nutritional scams or products that promise to cure cancer through nutrition or nutritional supplements. A registered dietitian, doctor or nurse is the best experts at discussing the most important things to manage with your diet or any dietary supplements.

This information is provided as an educational service only.

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