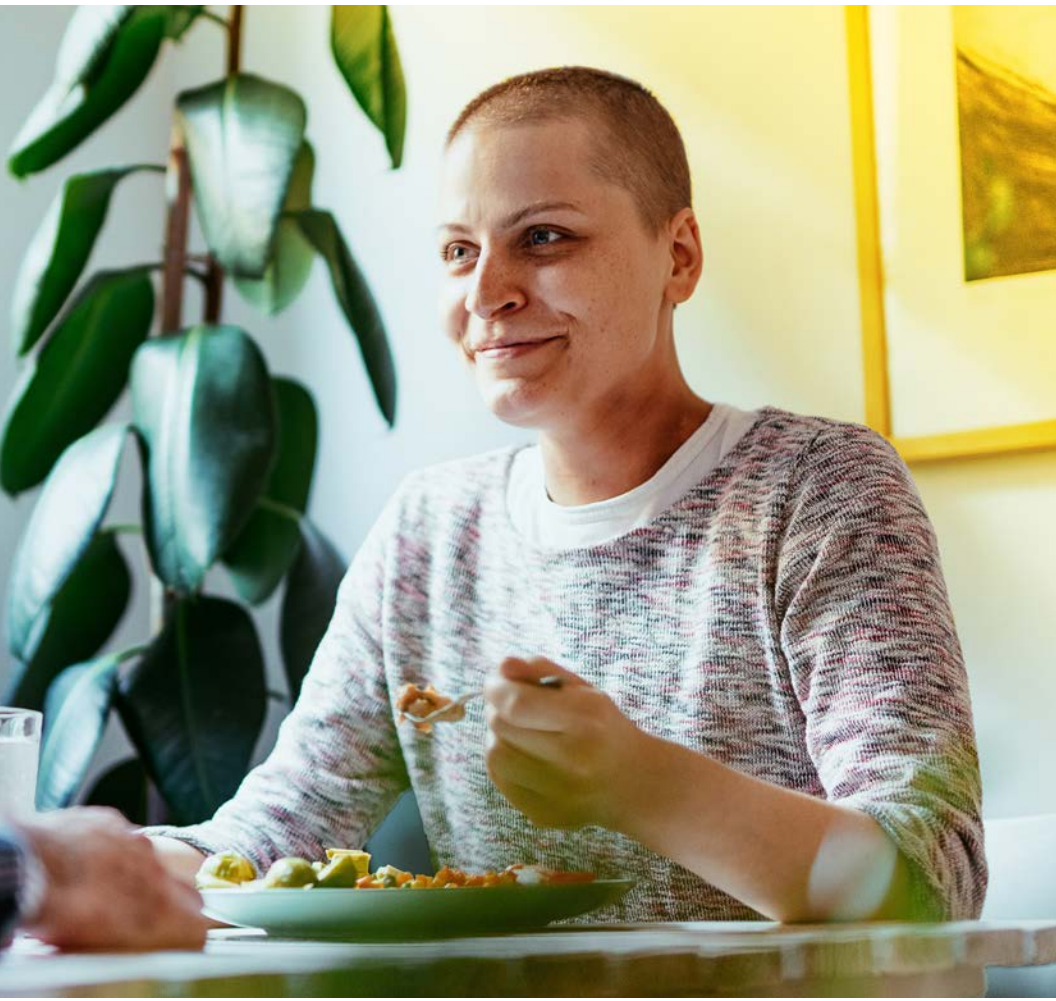
Canadian Cancer Society

Eating Well When You Have Cancer



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Eating Well When You Have Cancer

We provide a support system for people affected by cancer. Our services help answer your questions about cancer, manage life with cancer, find community and connection, and build wellness and resilience. Many of our programs are available in different languages.

From diagnosis to treatment to life after cancer, you can trust our publications for reliable information that's easy to understand.

We're here to support you.

This booklet includes quotes from people who have lived with cancer and dietitians who have worked with people who have cancer. We thank them for sharing their experiences with us.

Product or brand names that appear in this booklet are for example only. The Canadian Cancer Society does not endorse any specific product or brand.

We have short, easy-to-understand videos on common cancer topics. Visit **cancer.ca/cancerbasics.**

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Introduction

This booklet provides information about eating during cancer treatment and recovery. It's written for you and the caregivers who help you plan, shop for and cook meals. You don't have to read this booklet from beginning to end. Instead, use it as a guide and read the parts you need when you need them.

Some of the topics that you will find in this booklet are how to:

- plan nutritious meals
- deal with eating-related side effects from treatment
- cook and store food safely
- find nutrition information you can trust

Throughout this booklet you will hear from Canadians who have been where you are now and from dietitians who help people just like you. We hope their words help you understand that you are not alone and there is help when you need it.

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Be kind to yourself

Eating well can help you at every stage of your cancer experience. But cancer is different for everyone. Some people find their eating habits do not change very much. Others have more trouble with eating. The changes often depend on the type of cancer you have and how it is treated.

The goal for everyone is the same – to eat well and keep your body nourished during cancer treatment and recovery. This booklet has lots of information and tips to help you. But the most important message may be this:

It's OK if your eating habits aren't perfect during treatment.

Do your best – that's enough. You may not feel very hungry. You may eat small portions or only want certain foods. Some days you may feel like cooking. Other days you may want to drink smoothies. That's all fine. Don't add more pressure by trying to make perfect meals every day. You can still choose foods that provide your body with the most nutrients. This booklet will explain how.

Food and feelings

You may feel many different emotions during cancer treatment. Some people report feeling sad, helpless, anxious, scared or angry. But it's also possible to feel hopeful and grateful. Many people with cancer have a mix of these feelings.

Emotions can affect appetite. If you feel upset, you may lose your appetite or you may turn to food for comfort. Both are normal reactions to stress, anger or sadness. If you're having a hard time coping with emotions, talk to people you trust, such as friends, family, a spiritual leader or a therapist. Your cancer centre may have a social worker, dietitian or psychologist who can work with you.

It can also help to know that other people have been where you are now. You may want to try a support group or program, where you can share your feelings and hear how others have coped.

HOW WE CAN HELP YOU COPE

The Canadian Cancer Society is here to help you cope with your emotions when you have cancer.

- Call our Cancer Information Helpline at 1-888-939-3333 (TTY 1-866-786-3934) or visit cancer.ca. We provide reliable, up-to-date information about cancer.
- Join CancerConnection.ca. Our online community offers support and connection to other people going through similar experiences.
- Use our Community Services Locator at csl.cancer.ca to search a database of over 4,500 cancer-related services and resources nationwide. This includes support groups in your community and counsellors for emotional support. If you can't find what you need, contact us to help with your search.

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How a dietitian can help

The information in this booklet does not replace professional advice from people on your healthcare team.

Treating cancer, and coping with side effects of treatment, is about teamwork. The team is you and the many healthcare professionals who are focused on your physical and emotional health, such as your family doctor, cancer doctors (oncologists), nurses, speech therapists, social workers and psychologists. Your team may also include a dietitian who can answer your nutrition questions during treatment and recovery.

Dietitians, who can use the title "registered dietitian" or the initials RD or PDt or DtP after their name, are regulated healthcare professionals. This means that their work is held to standards that are designed to keep you safe. Among other qualifications, a dietitian has a university degree in nutrition and is registered or licensed as a dietitian with their provincial regulatory body.

> "People are often bombarded with misinformation about the role nutrition plays with cancer. I take the time to explain some of the body's changes that occur with cancer and during treatment. I explain why eating well is key, and how it looks different for everyone." – Alaa El Danab, RD (oncology dietitian)

Most cancer treatment centres have a dietitian who can provide you with one-on-one care. Ask for a referral to the team's dietitian. You do not need to pay the dietitian if they are part of your cancer centre's staff. They are part of your treatment team.

If your cancer centre does not have a dietitian, you can find one in private practice. Ask your healthcare team for help finding someone. You will have to pay the dietitian for this service. If you have private health insurance, it may cover the cost.

Nutrition and cancer

Eating well is important before, during and after cancer treatment. Eating well can:

- keep your energy level up
- help you feel better
- keep your body strong
- ensure you get the nutrients your body needs
- help you cope with side effects
- help you recover after treatment
- reduce your risk of infection
- provide a chance to connect with family or friends

It's also important to understand that your eating habits may change during cancer treatment. When you have cancer, your appetite (how hungry you feel) can change. Sometimes you may not feel hungry. Sometimes you may be very hungry. You may find that you like different foods compared to what you usually eat. Many people notice that treatment causes short-term changes like these. The good news is that they usually don't last long.

Nutrients and calories

Foods are filled with nutrients, which the body needs so it can function properly. Nutrients are important for the immune system, which helps fight infection. Try to eat a variety of foods each day so your body gets all of the nutrients that it needs.

The nutrients that the body needs are:

- protein
- carbohydrates (carbs)
- fat
- vitamins
- minerals
- water

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All foods contain a mix of these nutrients. Here are some examples:

- Broccoli contains carbs, vitamins and minerals.
- Salmon contains protein, fat, vitamins and minerals.
- Olive oil contains fat, vitamins and minerals.

The body's main source of energy comes from calories in food. There are calories in protein, carbs and fat. There are no calories in vitamins, minerals and water. We need to eat foods that contain calories daily, so we have enough energy.

Food and immune health

The immune system is a complex system made up of cells and organs that work together to protect the body and respond to infection (for example, bacteria and viruses) and disease. Researchers look at how diet, exercise and stress affect the immune system. Research tells us that a healthy lifestyle can help the immune system work as it should.

Many people wonder if eating specific foods will "boost" their immune system. The answer is no, but an overactive or boosted immune system is not your goal. You just want your immune system to function normally. A healthy eating plan can support your immune system.

Did you know?

Many products claim to boost immunity. But the idea makes no sense. Researchers do not yet know which cells to focus on for a "boost" effect. The term "immune boosting" is used a lot in marketing. It's not a real medical term.

In addition to eating a variety of nutritious foods to get lots of different nutrients, you can also support your immune system by:

- staying as active as you can
- resting when you need to
- doing what you can to reduce the stress in your life
- trying tai chi, yoga or meditation
- getting outside for a walk
- taking steps to quit smoking

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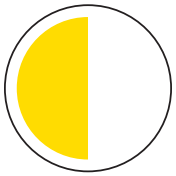
Using Canada's Food Guide

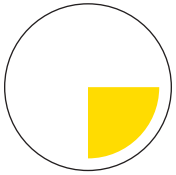
When you're feeling good, you can plan meals using Canada's Food Guide. These meals will help you get the nutrients your body needs.

What the food guide tells us
The food guide says to create meals from vegetables, fruit, whole grains and proteins and provides simple guidelines about how much of each.

You can find detailed information about Canada's Food Guide, including recipes, at canada.ca/FoodGuide.



Vegetables and fruit
Fill half your plate with vegetables and fruit. Try to make vegetables and fruit the largest proportion of the foods you eat throughout the day. Eat them raw, baked, roasted, steamed or stir-fried. You can also enjoy a variety of salads on half of your plate.

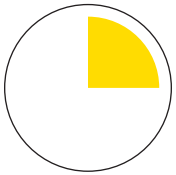


Whole grains
Fill a quarter of your plate with whole grains. Whole grains have important nutrients such as vitamins and minerals. They also have more fibre than refined grains such as white bread and white rice.

You can try:

- brown rice
- oats
- pot barley
- millet
- whole grain wheat – bread, pasta, crackers
- whole grain rye – bread, crackers
- wild rice
- sorghum
- buckwheat

Your dietitian may tell you to avoid whole grains if you have diarrhea or nausea during cancer treatment. If fibre bothers your stomach, ask your dietitian which grains are best for you. It may be easier to digest refined grains for a short time.



Protein
Fill a quarter of your plate with foods that contain protein. Try to choose protein foods that come from plants more often – you have more to choose from than you might think. There is protein in:

- beans, such as black beans, kidney beans, white beans
- peas, such as chickpeas, split peas, black-eyed peas
- lentils
- soy, such as edamame, tofu, tempeh, soy beverages
- eggs
- milk
- cheese and cottage cheese
- yogurt
- nuts, seeds and nut butters
- fish, such as trout, salmon, sardines, mackerel, cod
- shellfish, such as shrimp, lobster, crab, mussels, oysters
- poultry (sometimes called white meat), such as turkey, chicken, duck, goose
- wild game, such as venison, elk, moose, rabbit
- red meat, such as beef, veal, pork, lamb, mutton, goat, bison

Did you know?

A round plate is just one option. Use the proportions for whatever dish you create your meal in – a bowl, mug, glass, box, reusable container or any shape of plate that you have.

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You can choose any vegetable, fruit, grain and protein. When you shop and plan meals, choose vegetables, fruit, grains and proteins that:

- you and your family enjoy eating
- you can afford to buy
- you can easily source
- are part of your cultural or traditional recipes
- bring you comfort
- help you think of nice memories

What's not on the plate?
You may notice that the plate proportions do not include highly processed foods such as chips or cookies. That doesn't mean you can't have any. For highly processed food, the food guide says: If you choose these foods, eat them less often and in small amounts.

Other examples of highly processed foods can include:

- sugary drinks
- chocolate, candy and ice cream
- fast food such as burgers and fries
- bakery goods such as pastries, donuts and cakes

These foods are high in salt, sugar and fat. Eating a lot of these foods is linked to poor health.

Highly processed foods should not replace nutritious meals. But eating these foods sometimes can be part of balanced and healthy eating. They taste good and provide enjoyment and pleasure. That's important for your mental health. There may also be days when you feel sick to your stomach, and a cold popsicle or sugary gelatin dessert may be a welcome comfort.

Do you need to take a multivitamin?
If you follow Canada's Food Guide most days, you can get enough vitamins and minerals through food. If you're not very hungry and don't eat a lot, you may not get enough of these nutrients from food. Talk to your dietitian or doctor about what you're eating. If you're not eating enough to get the vitamins and minerals you need, they will recommend the right supplements for you.

Some people think that if a small amount of a vitamin or mineral is good, a large amount must be better. This is not the case. Large amounts of certain nutrients can cause harm or affect how cancer treatments work. Always talk to your doctor or dietitian before taking high doses of supplements.

It's also important to check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking any herbal supplements. Natural does not always mean safe. Some products may interfere with medicines or cancer treatments.

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YOUR DIETITIAN CAN HELP

You may have questions about following a particular food plan or diet.

What if you follow a medically required diet?
You may already follow a particular food plan for medical reasons. For example, you may follow a gluten-free diet for celiac disease or you may have a meal plan for managing type 2 diabetes. Speak with the dietitian at your cancer centre about what you eat and why. A dietitian can make sure your eating plan meets all of your health needs.

What about other diets?
As you go through your cancer experience, you may hear about different diets from family, friends or the media. Check with your doctor or dietitian before starting any new diet. Some diet plans cut out specific foods and can be low in nutrients. Your body needs calories and nutrients during cancer treatment, and your appetite may already be low because of side effects.

We are in the very early days of research into diets such as the ketogenic (keto) diet or intermittent fasting and whether they can help people with cancer. These diets may be helpful for specific types of cancer, but they may be harmful for other types of cancer. There are many different types of cancer, and the research on one diet plan may be specific to a certain type of cancer only. We need to learn a lot more in this area. The bottom line? Talk to your dietitian before following diets such as these.

What about sugar?

Sugars in food can be natural or added. Natural sugars are found in:

- fruit
- sweet vegetables such as carrots, beets and sweet potatoes
- dairy products that contain lactose (milk sugar)

Added sugars are used in cooking, baking and preparing food. They include:

- sugar – white, brown, icing, cane, beet, date, coconut, muscovado, raw, caster, turbinado
- syrup – maple, corn, agave, brown rice, coconut, barley malt, golden, treacle
- honey
- molasses
- ingredients ending in *-ose* – glucose, sucrose, dextrose, maltose and more

These added sugars are found as ingredients in many processed foods, such as candy, ice cream, sauces, cereals and baked goods.

Nutrition guidelines suggest eating fewer *added* sugars. These sugars do not contain any vitamins or minerals that your body needs. The World Health Organization and leading Canadian health organizations recommend limiting added sugars to no more than 48 grams (12 teaspoons) per day. You do not count the natural sugars from fruit, vegetables or milk as part of the 48 grams. You can still eat these foods every day. The benefits from the fibre, vitamins and minerals outweigh the sugar content.

For more information about sugars in your own eating plan, talk to a dietitian.

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Does sugar make cancer grow?
Sugar is a type of carbohydrate. It is not a carcinogen (cancer-causing agent). Sugar itself does not cause cancer cells to grow.

You may have heard that "sugar feeds cancer" or messages like that. Do not let these misleading messages stop you from eating fruit or dairy or enjoying something sweet once in a while. Sugar, in the form of glucose, is our body's main source of energy. While glucose is the name of an added sugar used in many processed foods, it's also the name of the sugar that your body makes and stores when digesting *any type* of food. Glucose feeds our brain and is the energy source for every cell in the body, including cancer cells.

Some people mistakenly think that if glucose feeds all cells in the body, then avoiding sugar or all carbohydrates will mean cancer cells can't grow or spread. But that's not how the body works. Your body will use whatever you eat to make glucose when it needs to. Even if you don't eat foods that contain sugar, your body will make glucose from protein, fat and other carbs.

The fear that sugar fuels cancer makes some people avoid all foods with sugar or carbs. Avoiding all carbs limits your food choices. That can be harmful if you're already losing weight due to cancer treatments. Talk to your dietitian before you follow a very low-carb diet.

What should you drink?

Every cell in your body needs water. Keep a water bottle near you and remember to take sips all day. There is no exact amount that everyone needs to drink. The amount of fluid you need may increase if you have a fever, are vomiting or have diarrhea. You may also need to drink more on hot days or if you're active and sweating. Talk to your dietitian to figure out how much fluid you need each day.

If you don't feel like drinking plain water, these drinks may be options:

- cow's milk or plant-based milks such as soy or almond beverages
- coffee or black tea (choose less often if it has caffeine)
- herbal teas such as peppermint or ginger

Ask your doctor before drinking other herbal teas or green tea. They may interfere with some cancer treatments.

Did you know?

Foods provide fluids too. Vegetables and fruit contain lots of water. Try celery, cucumbers, lettuce, watermelon, cantaloupe and oranges. There's also fluid in soup, popsicles, gelatin desserts and pudding.

Some days you may not feel hungry. But it is still very important to drink. Water has no calories, so it doesn't provide you with energy. But other drinks do have calories, plus protein, vitamins and minerals. On days when you don't feel hungry, have a drink that provides energy and prevents dehydration. Try milk, smoothies, puréed soup or a liquid nutrition supplement.

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"I would always keep liquids beside the bed. I would have Ensure and I would have water so he could choose. I would put straws in it so it's easy to drink. Little tricks like that make a big difference." – Holly (caregiver)

What about sugary drinks?

Sugary drinks are not the best way to stay hydrated. And they don't have many health benefits. But on days when nothing else appeals to you, they do provide liquid, calories and sometimes some nutrients (depending on the drink).

Sugary drinks include:

- 100% fruit juice
- chocolate milk
- drinkable yogurt
- fruit-flavoured drinks
- sweet iced tea
- specialty coffees and cold coffee drinks
- pop or soft drinks
- energy and sports drinks

What about drinking alcohol during treatment?

Before you choose to drink alcohol during treatment, talk to your doctor. Alcohol can interfere with some cancer treatments and medicines. It may make the treatment not work as well or it may make side effects worse. A drink may increase your appetite, but it may also make you feel full and then you don't eat enough.

DEHYDRATION

Dehydration means there is not enough water in your body. If you think you may be dehydrated, talk to your healthcare team right away. These are signs that you may be dehydrated:

- You have a headache.
- You feel very thirsty.
- You have dry skin or a dry mouth.
- You have no tears when you cry.
- You pee (urinate) less often.
- Your pee (urine) colour is dark yellow.
- You feel dizzy.

Tips to stay hydrated

- Carry a bottle, travel mug or thermos with your favourite drink.
- Take small sips all day if you find it hard to drink a full glass at once.
- Add flavour to water. Use mint leaves, sliced ginger, berries, a squeeze of orange, sliced cucumber or a cinnamon stick.
- If you're losing too much weight, drink between meals rather than during meals. Drinking at mealtimes can make you feel full and then you eat less.
- Try ice chips or popsicles.

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Quick and easy eating

We all think about the effort that goes into preparing food a little differently. For some, cooking is a joyful passion. For others, it's a chore. Or you may love to cook, but you may not feel like cooking big meals during cancer treatment.

You may find that you cook less during cancer treatment because you're tired, sad or not motivated. Maybe you find the smell of cooking unpleasant or preparing food makes you feel sick. Or it simply may be that cooking takes time that you do not have because you spend a lot of time at treatment.

Making meals simpler

If cooking seems like an ordeal, try the following ways to keep meals simple.

Have easy-to-prepare foods available
Fill your fridge, cupboards and freezer with healthy foods you can eat any time and that require minimal or no prep. Try items such as:

- whole grain bread or crackers
- canned beans
- canned tuna, salmon or other fish
- breakfast cereals
- frozen vegetables
- frozen fruit
- frozen dinners
- ready-to-eat soups
- dried fruit
- nuts and seeds
- nut butters

Make sure you also have sauces and seasonings to add flavour to these foods. Keep any of these items in your pantry: tomato sauce, coconut milk, mustard, mayonnaise, vinegar, chutney, soy sauce, salsa, ketchup, jerk, black bean sauce, fish sauce, harissa, pesto, guacamole and hot sauce. Have a variety of dried herbs and spices too.

"Try your best to plan ahead and keep it simple! Meals do not have to be conventional. I am a big believer in snacking. I always tell people to keep easy-to-prepare or pre-packaged foods on hand. All things considered, having something to eat is always better than having nothing." – Alaa El Danab, RD (oncology dietitian)

10-MINUTE MEALS

Here are some meals you can make when you don't have a lot of time or energy:

- scrambled eggs + toast + tomato
- oatmeal + berries + nut butter
- cereal + milk + banana
- Greek yogurt + granola + berries
- congee + chicken + ginger
- tuna + crackers + sliced peppers
- pita + hummus + carrot sticks
- broth with noodles + tofu + greens
- tortilla + corn + beans
- bread + cheese or turkey + vegetable toppings
- rice + beans + chopped tomato
- bagged lettuce + canned salmon + bread

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Cook and freeze meals ahead of time

On days when you're feeling well or have more time, cook and freeze foods in meal-size portions. Pick your favourite dish that freezes well and prepare it in advance. Enjoy it on days when you're too tired to cook. Some other options are:

- oatmeal
- pancakes
- congee, jook or other rice porridge
- lentil dal
- soup – pea, lentil, corn, vegetable, borscht, chicken noodle, hot and sour, pho, miso
- chicken, fish or vegetable curry
- chicken, lamb, goat, beef or peanut stew
- your favourite casserole
- rice and beans
- pasta dishes such as lasagna, cannelloni or macaroni and cheese
- cabbage rolls or stuffed grape leaves
- stuffed dumplings – wontons, empanadas, samosas, gyozas, kreplach, bao buns

Get meals delivered

Many online companies and grocery stores offer meal kits with pre-portioned ingredients so all you need to do is cook. No prep involved. Grocery stores may also offer ready-made meals for home delivery. You can also try these types of meal services:

- Contact Meals on Wheels or another community-based meal delivery service.
- Order take-out from your favourite restaurant.
- Use a homemaking service where someone comes to your home to make meals for you. A social worker at your cancer centre can suggest other options too.

Ask for and accept help

Your friends and family may have offered to help. Now's the right time to accept. It's not always easy to ask for or accept help. But you'll find family and friends are usually happy to do what they can. You can ask them to help you in different ways:

- Shop for groceries using a list you've prepared.
- Stock your cupboards with basic foods that last a long time.
- Drop off fresh foods like vegetables and fruit a couple of times a week.
- Wash and cut up produce that you feel like eating soon.
- Bring a simple meal for you and your family to eat.
- Prepare food in batches for you. Foods like tomato sauce, soups, stews, curries, quiches and pancakes can be frozen in single-serving containers and thawed when you want them.

You can also use a website or app to set up a shared calendar of meals. Your friends and family can pick a day to sign up to bring you a meal. Try asking someone who has a good idea of your food tastes to search online for "calendars to coordinate meals" and then look after this for you.

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Smart snacking

Having snacks between meals can help you keep your energy level up and get more calories if your appetite is low. Choose snacks made from vegetables, fruit, grains and protein – just like the ingredients you'd find in balanced meals. Examples of snacks are an apple, whole grain crackers with cheese, or nuts and raisins.

When you're away from home, carry snacks with you. You can bring snacks in your bag or car. If you have a long day of appointments, make sure to bring water and snacks with you. If you'll be out all day, choose snacks that don't need to be kept in the fridge such as:

- fruit
- cut-up vegetables
- kale chips
- roasted seaweed
- crackers or rice cakes with peanut butter
- trail mix
- dried fruit
- mixed nuts
- roasted chickpeas, mung beans or lentils
- granola bars
- protein bars
- fruit and nut bars
- popcorn
- sunflower or pumpkin seeds
- wasabi peas
- peanuts
- roasted chestnuts
- sesame halva (halwa)
- bran muffins

Maybe you have access to a fridge and microwave when you're out. If you do, try these snacks that need to be kept cold:

- hard-boiled eggs
- sandwiches or wraps
- cheese and crackers
- congee, jook or other rice porridge
- hummus with vegetables
- bean or cheese burritos
- yogurt
- cottage cheese and fruit
- smoothies
- turkey and cheese roll-ups
- idlis (lentil and rice cakes)

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Grocery shopping

You may go to the grocery store, shop online or get groceries delivered. All are great options. No matter how you shop, you're more likely to eat well if you have nutritious foods in your fridge and cupboards.

Making nutritious and budget-friendly choices

Sometimes a cancer diagnosis means time off work and a change in income or expenses. This may affect the foods you can afford. You can still plan meals using Canada's Food Guide and make nutritious choices.

Did you know?

The most expensive brands are usually kept at your eye level in stores. Better deals can be found if you shop the upper and lower shelves. And "special" may just mean an item is on a large display, not on sale. The price may be the same as usual.

Vegetables and fruit

Buy vegetables and fruit that you like. Fresh, frozen or canned – it's all good.

Get fresh vegetables and fruit when they're in season or on sale. Cut them up and store them in the freezer. This works well for berries, squash, peas, corn and some leafy greens like spinach, kale and chard.

"I buy nectarines in season and cut and freeze them in snack-size freezer bags. It's perfect for a smoothie mixed along with a banana (fresh or frozen)." – Betty (caregiver)

Most of the time, local and in-season produce is more affordable than imported vegetables and fruit. Many of these nutritious options stay fresh for up to 4 weeks. Try:

- cabbage
- potatoes
- carrots
- turnips
- beets
- onions
- squash
- corn
- broccoli
- sweet potatoes
- bananas
- apples
- melon

Frozen products are just as nutritious as fresh. Plus, they can stay fresh for a year in the freezer, so there is less waste. Canned options are also nutritious and last a long time. Try to find canned vegetables and fruit without added salt or sugar.

Do you need to buy organic?

Organic vegetables and fruit are grown and processed differently than non-organic foods. Some people choose organic foods because they believe that they are healthier and safer. To date, there is not enough evidence to confirm if this is true. Eating lots of vegetables and fruit is a smart choice, whether they are organic or not. The best advice is to eat what you can access, afford and enjoy most. And whether you're eating organic or non-organic vegetables and fruit, don't forget to first wash them well.

Whole grains

Choose whole grain products when you can.

- Choose bread or pasta that lists "whole grain" flour as the first ingredient. For example, look for ingredients such as "whole grain wheat" or "whole grain rye."
- Try brown, red, black, purple or wild rice instead of white rice.
- Buy whole grain cereals. Try steel-cut or rolled oats for making oatmeal.
- Choose whole grains for side dishes, such as bulgur (cracked wheat), quinoa, sorghum, buckwheat, farro and millet.

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Stock up on these items when they are on sale if you can. Grains last for at least a few months (and sometimes much longer) when stored in an airtight container away from light and heat.

Protein

Choose fresh or frozen meat, poultry and fish. Canned fish is also convenient. Try canned tuna, sardines or salmon. Don't forget about plant-based sources of protein, such as tofu, beans, tempeh, lentils, seeds, nuts and nut butters.

There is a lot of protein in eggs, milk, cheese and yogurt. If you're trying to get more protein, buy Greek or Icelandic skyr yogurt. They have double the amount of protein compared to regular plain yogurt.

Did you know?

Some plant-based milk alternatives have more protein than others. If you don't drink cow's milk but want to choose a plant-based milk that contains protein, read Nutrition Facts labels. (You can also check for calcium and vitamin D as added benefits.) Soy, chickpea and pea milks have the most protein. Milk alternatives made from cashews, almonds, oat and coconut are usually low in protein.

Some cuts of meat and many kinds of fish are expensive. You can still get lots of good-quality protein from foods that cost less. Try:

- eggs
- canned or dry beans and lentils
- tofu
- edamame (frozen green soybeans)
- canned fish
- peanut butter
- peanuts
- chicken thighs, legs or drumsticks
- flank steak
- ground beef, chicken or turkey
- stewing meat
- chickpea flour (besan)
- chuck roast
- lamb shoulder chops
- white fish
- evaporated skim milk
- store-brand plain yogurt in large tubs

Nutritious foods for less

You can eat well without relying on expensive ingredients. Here are some food choices that cost less but are just as nutritious.

More expensive options	More affordable substitutes
Quinoa	Brown rice or millet
Acai or Goji berries	Raisins
Canned albacore tuna	Canned skipjack tuna
Canned sockeye salmon	Canned pink salmon
Almond butter	Peanut butter
Walnuts, almonds or pecans	Sunflower seeds or pumpkin seeds
Halibut	Haddock or tilapia
Ready-made granola	Rolled oats
Ground beef	Tofu or brown lentils
Boneless chicken breasts	Chicken thighs

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When you need help

If you need help sourcing food, here are some resources you can reach out to. Dietitians at your treatment centre may also know about helpful local options.

Food Banks Canada: The Food Banks Canada network is made up of food banks in each province and territory. To find a food bank location near you, visit foodbankscanada.ca and click "find a food bank." You can get canned and dry food at the food bank, but more than 40% of food at food banks is fresh. You can get milk, eggs, bread, vegetables and fruit too.

Salvation Army: Across Canada, the Salvation Army has food banks that are open to assist you. You can select the food you want, similar to shopping at a grocery store. They also offer nutritious meals that you can enjoy at no cost. For more information, visit salvationarmy.ca/what-we-do/food-services.

Community gardens: Many cities have local gardens that you can access for fresh, low-cost or free produce. Check your local community centre or public health unit to learn about community gardens in your area.

Managing eating-related side effects

You may have side effects during cancer treatment. They may be caused by the cancer itself or they may be due to cancer treatment. This section will give you information about side effects that can affect eating and nutrition and how to manage them. Most side effects are short-term and will usually stop during or after treatment.

You can also find information about side effects at cancer.ca/sideeffects.

> "I have heard people with cancer describe many challenges with eating during treatment, such as losing their appetite, experiencing taste changes or feeling full quickly. It's important to know that these changes are temporary, and you should focus on eating the foods that work for you on that day, in that moment." – Caitlin Wallis, RD (oncology dietitian)

Weight loss and low appetite

You may lose your appetite during treatment. That means you don't feel hungry and don't eat very much. This may cause weight loss.

You are not alone if this side effect happens to you. It is very common during cancer treatment, and it can happen for many different reasons. Many other side effects, such as constipation, sore mouth or changes in taste, can make you feel less hungry. If you're less active, you may not feel like eating as much. It could also be the cancer itself or your treatment that causes weight loss and low appetite.

Sometimes you may eat just a few bites and then feel full. Your dietitian may call this early satiety, and many people experience it during cancer treatment. The information in this section will help. You can also try these tips if you feel full quickly:

- Drink beverages between meals instead of with meals so they don't fill up the stomach at mealtime.

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- Avoid foods that can cause bloating, such as beans, broccoli, corn, cabbage, cauliflower, carbonated drinks and chewing gum.

What you can do if your appetite is low

During treatment, eating may feel like a chore. Remember that food helps your body heal. It provides energy and nutrients. Here are some tips to help you eat a little bit, even when you're not feeling very hungry.

Keep mealtimes flexible. Eat when you feel hungry. It does not have to be at a certain time of day. For example, if you usually eat lunch at noon but feel hungry one day at 11:00 a.m., eat then. You can have small meals and eat snacks in between meals. Eat whatever you want, whenever you want it. Eat breakfast food at suppertime if that is most appealing. Even if you can only eat a few foods, stick with them until you're able to eat more.

Try not to skip meals. Eat every 1 to 2 hours even if it's only a few bites. Try eating small meals and snacks throughout the day. Between meals, sip on drinks that are high in calories and protein, such as milkshakes, smoothies and liquid nutrition supplements. Don't worry if you can't eat at all one day. But talk to your healthcare team if this happens often and you're losing weight.

Eat well when your energy level is highest. Make the most of your good days. You may have a better appetite in the morning, so eat a large breakfast. Or have a snack at night if that's when you have energy.

Try some light exercise. It may help increase your appetite. If you can, go for a short walk outdoors. Increased activity and fresh air both boost the appetite.

If you smoke, try to cut down as much as possible. Smoking can reduce your appetite. Ask your doctor for support if you want to stop smoking.

Make meals fun and tasty. Try new ways of presenting food. Put small portions on the plate or use smaller plates. Make mealtime pleasant with soft lights and your favourite music. Have meals with family or friends.

Get enough calories. You can help prevent weight loss by increasing the calories in the food you eat. Make every bite count by adding high-calorie ingredients to your meals and snacks.

ADD these high-calorie ingredients	**TO** these meals and snacks
Avocado, mayonnaise or salad dressing	Sandwiches, salads, dips
Nuts and seeds	Cereal, baked goods, yogurt, rice, salads, trail mix
Nut butters (such as peanut butter)	Smoothies, sandwiches, breads, muffins, soups, stews, curries
Milk or milk alternatives (such as soy or pea milk)	Soups, cereal, milkshakes, smoothies, mashed potatoes, baked goods, oatmeal, pancakes, porridge
Powdered milk or "instant breakfast" drink powder	Gravy, sauces, cereal, milk, soups, pancakes, oatmeal, porridge, smoothies
Yogurt, Greek yogurt, skyr or sour cream	Smoothies, dips, salad dressing, soups, sauces or as a topping for tacos, perogies and potatoes
Whipping cream, table cream or coconut milk	Smoothies, cereal, milkshakes, pudding, custard, gelatin desserts
Ice cream or frozen desserts	Fruit, milkshakes, smoothies
Butter, soft margarine, oil	Soups, salads, rice, noodles, hot cereal, potatoes, cooked vegetables, dips, sauces, stir-fries, stews, curries
Hard cheese (pasteurized)	Scrambled eggs, sandwiches, potatoes, soups, sauces, stews
Soft cheese and cream cheese (pasteurized)	Crackers, breads, noodles, potatoes, grain dishes
Dried fruit	Salads, soups, stews, trail mix, cereal, baked goods, snacks
Granola	Ice cream, yogurt, fruit, trail mix, smoothies

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You may be surprised to see foods such as ice cream and butter on this list. Now is the time to focus on getting enough calories. Don't be too concerned that some of these options are high in sugar or fat. This is just a short-term eating plan. Once you get your appetite back, you can focus on a more balanced diet. What's most important right now is maintaining your weight.

THE IMPORTANCE OF PROTEIN DURING TREATMENT

Protein is good for your health in many ways. It helps your body grow cells, heal tissue and maintain a healthy immune system. It can help you avoid infection and recover more quickly. The key is to know where to find protein.

Here are some foods that contain protein:

- meat and poultry
- fish and shellfish
- eggs
- dairy foods such as milk, yogurt, cheese, cottage cheese, skim milk powder and kefir
- beans, peas and lentils
- soy foods such as tofu, soy beverages and edamame
- nut butters
- nuts and seeds

"I asked for and was given lists of the protein contents in many foods that I had been able to eat. I learned to make soups that contained milk, yogurt, cheddar cheese and I used a lot of tofu to supplement my protein intake." – Mona

When you just can't eat

There may be times when you feel like you just can't eat. Maybe you have a sore mouth or swallowing has become difficult for you. At times like this, it can be hard to meet all your nutrition needs. If you can't eat for more than a couple of days and are losing weight, talk to your healthcare team. They might suggest one of these options.

Commercial nutrition supplements

Commercial nutrition supplements are a good source of calories, protein, vitamins and minerals. They come in a variety of forms, including drinks, powder, pudding and protein bars.

Try different products to see which ones you like best. Brands include Boost and Ensure. You can buy them or generic versions at a drugstore or grocery store. You can also order these products online for home delivery. You don't need a prescription to buy them.

"There are many ways to use commercial nutrition supplements. You can dilute them with milk if they are too sweet or blend them with fruit and yogurt if you don't like the taste. These products can be an easy way to add in extra calories and protein when it's challenging to eat. Ask your dietitian for recipes!" – Caitlin Wallis, RD (oncology dietitian)

But these drinks contain sugar – is that OK?

Some people are concerned that liquid nutrition supplements contain sugar and wonder if they are similar to pop or soft drinks. They are not. For example, one 237 mL ready-to-use drink contains 14 grams (2.5 teaspoons) of sugar but also 27 vitamins and minerals, plus 10 grams of protein. To compare, a can of cola contains 0 protein and 40 grams (10 teaspoons) of sugar, with no vitamins or minerals. Think of these drinks as mini meals when your appetite is low and you're too tired to cook. A little sugar is OK.

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Tube feeding
Tube feeding is a way of getting nutrition through a thin, flexible tube that is placed directly into your stomach or intestine. Once the tube is in place, a liquid nutrition supplement is given through it.

If it is too hard to eat or drink anything and you're losing a lot of weight, your doctor or dietitian may suggest tube feeding to help meet your nutrition needs. It can be used if you:

- need more calories and protein than you can eat
- have problems swallowing
- can't eat or drink during or after cancer treatment
- have an extremely sore mouth or throat

Your dietitian will tell you how much liquid nutrition supplement you need. Some people with feeding tubes still eat and drink by mouth too. You may also receive medicine through the feeding tube.

> "My mom had a feeding tube installed but still ate small meals (she ate lots of oatmeal and tapioca). Having the feeding tube took away the pressure to eat lots of food by mouth. The feeding tube was also helpful because we could hydrate her without Mom having to drink lots of fluids." – Susan (caregiver)

Intravenous (IV) nutrition
IV nutrition provides fluid and nutrients directly into the blood. It does this through a catheter inserted into a vein in your chest or arm. IV nutrition does not use the stomach or intestines to digest food.

IV nutrition may be used if:

- your gastrointestinal (GI) tract is not working well
- your bowel needs a rest and no food can go into your GI tract
- you can't be tube fed for some reason

IV nutrition is usually started in the hospital. Your healthcare team will give you instructions on how to give IV nutrition at home.

Weight gain

It is more common for people who have cancer to lose weight, but some gain weight. You may gain weight during cancer treatment due to:

- snacking more to control nausea
- using food as a way to deal with your feelings (emotional eating)
- being less active
- hormone therapy
- corticosteroids
- drugs that cause the body to retain extra fluid (edema)
- treatments that cause early menopause

If you are currently at a healthy weight, gaining a little weight during treatment isn't usually a concern. But gaining a larger amount of weight can affect your health and well-being.

What you can do
Work with your healthcare team to figure out why you're gaining weight. Your team can help you understand what is happening and suggest helpful tips to manage it.

Be patient with yourself and have realistic goals. Dealing with weight gain can be challenging.

If weight gain is due to corticosteroids, know that the weight is usually lost after your treatment ends. If weight gain is due to eating habits, your dietitian can teach you how to make healthy food and lifestyle choices. Your dietitian may suggest that you try some of the following:

- Follow Canada's Food Guide.
- Listen to your appetite. That means you eat when you're hungry and stop eating when you feel full.
- Choose foods that contain fibre and protein, which help you feel full. Try vegetables, fruit, beans, lentils and whole grains.
- Snack on vegetables and fruit instead of chips or candy.
- Limit salty foods if your body is retaining fluid.
- Try being physically active if you feel up to it.

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The advice from your dietitian will be personalized to you. They will help you learn how to maintain healthy eating habits during treatment. The best time to try to lose weight on purpose (intentional weight loss) can vary. For some people it may be safe to try to lose weight during treatment and for others it may be better to wait until treatment is finished. If you have side effects from treatment that limit what you can eat, it is likely best to wait before trying to lose weight.

Fatigue

Fatigue is the most common side effect of cancer treatment. It is tiredness, exhaustion or a general lack of energy. Fatigue is different from the tiredness a person usually feels at the end of the day. Fatigue can make it harder to shop for groceries, prepare food or even eat a meal.

This may surprise you, but there is lots of research to show that getting some physical activity into your day actually improves fatigue and makes you feel more energized. So give it a try when you can – it just might help.

These tips can help you eat better and manage fatigue:

- Eat small amounts of food throughout the day.
- Eat when you have the most energy.
- Drink plenty of fluids to stay hydrated.
- Choose foods that are easy, such as frozen meals or takeout.
- Cook in batches when you have more energy. Freeze the food that you cook in portions that can be easily reheated.
- Try a smoothie or liquid nutrition supplement if you don't feel well enough to prepare a meal.
- Ask friends and family to help with grocery shopping and preparing meals.
- Meditate or try relaxation exercises.
- Talk to a counsellor to help with your emotions and managing stress.

Ask your dietitian or social worker about community resources like Meals on Wheels or frozen meal programs.

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Low red blood cell counts

When you have a low number of healthy red blood cells in your body, it is called anemia. Without enough red blood cells, your body tissues don't get enough oxygen to do their jobs properly. This can leave you feeling tired, weak, dizzy or short of breath. Some cancer treatments can cause anemia. It can also be caused by a lack of nutrients in your diet.

If you have anemia, your healthcare team may prescribe medicines to help correct low levels of iron, vitamin B12 or folic acid. Eating foods high in these nutrients can also help.

Foods high in iron	Foods high in vitamin B12	Foods high in folic acid
Animal-based Red meat, dark poultry **Plant-based** Beans, peas and lentils Leafy greens Enriched breads and cereals	Meat, chicken and fish Dairy Eggs Fortified milk alternatives Nutritional yeast	Enriched breads and cereals Asparagus, broccoli, leafy greens Beans, peas and lentils

In some cases, you may also need blood transfusions or special medicines (growth factors) that stimulate the bone marrow to make red blood cells to treat anemia.

> "Our bodies easily absorb heme iron, which is the iron that comes from animal-based foods such as red meat, poultry, fish and eggs. It's harder for our bodies to absorb non-heme iron, which comes from plant-based foods such as nuts, seeds, beans, lentils and fortified grains. But it's important to have variety in what we eat. To help your body absorb plant-based sources of iron, combine these foods with foods that are rich in vitamin C. For example: cooked oatmeal (non-heme iron) with mixed berries (vitamin C) or black bean dip (non-heme iron) with lime juice (vitamin C)." – Alaa El Danab, RD (oncology dietitian)

Constipation

Constipation is when your stool (poop) is hard, dry and difficult to pass. It affects about half of all people with cancer. It can be caused by cancer treatments and some medicines. It can also happen due to what and how much you eat and drink and how active you are.

If you're constipated, talk to your healthcare team. They may recommend a stool softener or laxative.

Here are some ideas that may help with constipation:

- Slowly add more fibre and water to your diet. Try bran cereal or muffins, whole grains, vegetables, fruit, beans, seeds, nuts and dried fruit such as prunes.
- Choose high-fibre cereals. Read labels and look for more than 4 grams of fibre per serving.
- Drink more fluids. Try water, prune juice, lemonade, broth, gelatin desserts and popsicles.
- Try hot or warm liquids like cocoa, tea or lemon water.
- Eat 4 to 5 prunes or drink 125 mL (1/2 cup) of prune juice.
- Add small amounts of bran to cooking or baking.
- Be more physically active if you can.
- Make a batch of dried fruit spread, a jam-like spread made from prunes, dates and raisins. (Check with your doctor or dietitian if you're not sure if this recipe is right for you.)

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DRIED FRUIT SPREAD

Ingredients

250 mL (1 cup) pitted prunes

250 mL (1 cup) pitted dates

250 mL (1 cup) raisins

500 mL (2 cups) prune juice

5 mL (1 tsp) cinnamon

Directions

1. Combine all ingredients in a medium-sized pot.
2. Bring mixture to a boil over medium heat.
3. Reduce heat to low and simmer for about 20 to 22 minutes, until liquid is mostly absorbed. Stir every few minutes.
4. Let mixture cool for about 10 minutes.
5. Blend until smooth using a countertop blender or immersion blender.

Refrigerate in a sealed container for up to 1 week.

Serving suggestions

Add a spoonful to smoothies. Serve on oatmeal, yogurt or cereal. Or enjoy it as a spread on crackers, muffins or toast.

Nausea and vomiting

Nausea is feeling sick to your stomach. Vomiting is throwing up. They are common side effects of cancer treatment, especially chemotherapy.

Your doctor can prescribe anti-nausea drugs. Different drugs work for different people and you may need more than one drug to feel better. Your healthcare team can help you find the ones that work best for you. It's often easier to prevent nausea than to treat it after it starts. If your doctor prescribes anti-nausea drugs for you, follow the instructions you're given, even if you don't feel sick yet.

Figure out what causes nausea for you and avoid these triggers as much as possible. These may include specific foods, smells, events or a time of day.

To manage nausea and vomiting, try these tips:

- Eat smaller meals and snacks all day.
- Don't let yourself get hungry. Hunger can make nausea worse.
- Eat slowly.
- Snack on dry foods every few hours during the day. Try crackers, toast, cereal, bread sticks, social tea biscuits or arrowroot cookies.
- Keep dry foods by your bed so you can eat before sleeping or first thing in the morning.
- Avoid foods that are very sweet, greasy, fried or spicy.
- If nausea occurs during treatment appointments, try not eating for 1 to 2 hours before. Wait an hour after treatment before eating again.
- Sip water, sports drinks, broth or herbal teas all day. Cool or lukewarm liquids may be easier to drink than hot or cold liquids.
- Try ginger tea or ginger candies. Ginger may help prevent nausea.
- Avoid alcohol.
- Avoid caffeine (as found in coffee and black or green tea).
- Don't drink anything with meals. Drink and eat at least 30 minutes apart.

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- Rinse your mouth with water or club soda to remove unpleasant tastes.
- Keep your mouth clean by brushing your teeth at least twice a day.
- Sit up after eating.
- If you need to lie down after eating, keep your head and shoulders propped up with pillows.
- Don't wear clothes that are tight around the waist.

If food smells make you sick to your stomach, these tips may help:

- Avoid foods with a strong smell.
- Let other people do the cooking.
- Try eating cold meals. They won't smell as strong.
- Eat in a well-ventilated room with no cooking odours.
- Open a window or use a fan to get plenty of fresh air.

"On my worst treatment days, the foods that I was able to tolerate were mashed potatoes, toasted English muffins and boiled eggs. Yep, bland, but at least it stayed down!" – Lesley

What to watch for: Call your healthcare team if you can't stop vomiting or can't keep liquids down for more than 24 hours after your treatment.

Diarrhea

Some cancer treatments and medicines can cause loose, frequent stools (poop). Diarrhea is often defined as 2 or more loose stools in 4 hours. Diarrhea can cause dehydration and fatigue. It needs to be managed quickly. Your healthcare team may suggest medicine to take.

You can try these ways to manage diarrhea:

- Drink plenty of fluids such as water and clear broth. They prevent dehydration.
- Limit sugary drinks because they can increase diarrhea.
- Choose drinks that do not have caffeine and are not carbonated. Avoid coffee, tea, pop and club soda.
- Drink liquids between meals to stay hydrated.
- Eat small meals and snacks.
- Choose foods that are low in fibre. Try white bread, pasta or rice, crackers, bananas, melon, applesauce, potatoes without skin, eggs, poultry and fish.
- Stay away from foods that are very high in fibre, such as whole grains, beans, nuts, seeds and berries.
- Choose salty foods like soups, sports drinks, crackers and pretzels to replace lost sodium.
- Try foods that are high in potassium such as potatoes, bananas and oranges.
- Limit greasy, fried, spicy or sugary foods.
- Avoid sugarless gum and candies made with sorbitol, which acts like a laxative.
- Avoid prunes, prune juice, papaya and rhubarb, which have a natural laxative effect.
- Limit milk products (milk, ice cream, cheese) if they make your diarrhea worse.

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Gas, bloating and cramps

Some treatments and medicines may cause gas, bloating or cramps. Gas can also be a sign of constipation, so make sure you try to poop regularly.

It can help to limit drinks and foods that can cause gas or bloating. These include:

- carbonated drinks and beer
- spinach, broccoli, cabbage and cauliflower
- garlic and onion
- salads with lettuce, cucumber and peppers
- beans, peas and lentils

You can also try these tips:

- Eat small, frequent meals or snacks throughout the day.
- Sip fluids slowly and don't use a straw for drinking.
- Avoid chewing gum.
- Try gentle exercise, like walking. It may bring you some relief.

Could it be lactose intolerance?
If you notice gas, bloating or diarrhea after you eat milk products, it may be lactose intolerance. Milk contains a sugar called lactose, which some people can't digest very well. Cancer treatments may cause lactose intolerance, but this is not common. Most people can still enjoy dairy foods. If you suspect lactose intolerance, talk to your dietitian. They can help you find lactose-free milk products or plant-based milk alternatives.

"If you are lactose intolerant, I suggest starting with lactose-free products or a milk alternative, such as soy milk, to benefit from the protein. In extreme situations, I suggest avoiding dairy altogether. Because it is often difficult to find a good balance, speak to a dietitian for a step-by-step, tailored approach."
– Alaa El Danab, RD (oncology dietitian)

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Taste changes

You may find that your sense of taste is different during cancer treatment. Sometimes foods taste bland or every flavour tastes the same. Some foods may taste sweeter than usual. And other foods may have a bitter or metallic taste.

Here are some ideas that may help food taste better:

- Rinse your mouth before and after eating. This will help clear your taste buds. You can use club soda or a mixture of salt with water.
- Keep your mouth and teeth clean. If your mouth is sore, your doctor or dentist can suggest gentle ways of cleaning your teeth.
- Serve foods cold or at room temperature. This will help reduce strong tastes.
- Suck on lemon candies and mints. Chew gum. These get rid of bad tastes after you've eaten.

> "My oncologist told me to eat what I wanted during my treatment because it was difficult to eat anything with the constant bad taste in my mouth. She wanted me to enjoy myself. Frozen fruits and frozen yogurt, that was pretty good! I drank lots of flavoured water to help with the bad taste and my very dry mouth." – Lena

If food is bland

- Add your favourite herbs and spices to make food taste better.
- Add onion and garlic. They have strong flavours.
- Try strong sauces such as tomato sauce, soy sauce, salsa, curry, harissa, jerk or any other favourites.

If food tastes metallic

- Use plastic forks and spoons instead of metal ones.
- Try glass cookware instead of metal.
- Add tart flavours from lemons and other citrus fruit, vinegar and pickled foods (unless you have a sore mouth).
- Add sweet flavours to food. Try honey, sugar or fruit.

If food tastes too bitter

- Add fruit to meals.
- Drink mint tea.
- Try ginger ale or ginger tea.
- Add a bit of maple syrup, sugar or honey to foods.

If food tastes too sweet

- Dilute sweet drinks with water or ice.
- Try vegetables instead of fruit.
- Add a little salt or lemon juice to foods.
- Sip and then hold herbal tea in your mouth for a moment before you eat. This can help make your taste buds less sensitive to sweet foods.

If meat does not taste good

- Marinate meat in liquids to change the flavour and make it more appealing.
- Try marinades made with fruit juices, salad dressings, sweet and sour sauce, soy sauce or barbecue sauce.
- Skip meat and choose other high-protein foods such as fish, poultry, tofu, eggs, dairy or beans instead.

Did you know?

Some people are bothered by strong smells, which can then affect how they feel about eating certain foods. Heat makes smells stronger, so you can reduce odours by eating foods that don't need to be cooked. If the smell of your drink bothers you, use a cup with a lid and drink through a straw.

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Food cravings or dislikes

You may find that you suddenly crave some foods. Or you may not want to eat foods that you used to enjoy. Your cravings and dislikes can change over time, even from day to day. Know that the food dislikes will pass. In the meantime, focus on the foods you like best.

You can try these tips:

- Eat what you enjoy when your appetite is good.
- Use food cravings to your advantage by including the foods you crave in healthy meals and snacks. For example, chocolate can be used in a milkshake, in banana bread or as a dip for fruit.
- Keep your favourite snacks around so you can nibble a bit even if you don't feel like eating a lot.
- Take a break from your favourite foods when you're vomiting or feeling nauseous. This will keep you from linking these foods to feeling sick.
- Add extra seasonings if foods taste too bland or to mask unpleasant tastes.

Dry mouth

Dry mouth means you have less saliva in your mouth. Some cancer treatments can cause dry mouth. The most common cause of dry mouth is having radiation therapy to the head or neck area.

Saliva helps break down food and start the digestion process. When you have a dry mouth, eating can be difficult.

Saliva also helps prevent tooth decay by lowering acid levels in the mouth and cleaning the teeth and gums. If there isn't enough saliva, the mouth cannot clean itself properly and the teeth can lose minerals.

> "Using sugar-free mints before and after eating can help stimulate saliva production at meals. Adding sauces, butter or oil to foods make it easier to swallow. Another option you can try is xylitol discs (XyliMelts), which can be most helpful at night if you are having trouble sleeping because of your dry mouth."
> – Caitlin Wallis, RD (oncology dietitian)

Try these tips to help with dry mouth:

- Sip water during meals. Take sips of fluid between bites of food. This will make chewing and swallowing easier.
- Keep your mouth moist. Sip water and other fluids all day.
- Carry a water bottle so it is easy for you to sip water.
- Suck on ice chips or sugarless hard candy.
- Chew sugarless gum.
- Avoid drinks with a lot of sugar or acid. They can cause tooth decay.
- Limit drinks with caffeine such as coffee, tea and cola. Caffeine can dry out the mouth.
- Avoid alcohol.
- Rinse your mouth with water before and after eating. Or try a homemade mouth rinse by mixing a cup of warm water with a couple of shakes of salt and baking soda.

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- Add moisture to solid foods by adding broth, soup, sauce, gravy, cream, butter or oil.
- Blend foods into a purée.
- Make gravy and have it ready to add to meat, potatoes and vegetables.
- Dunk or soak dry foods in liquids.
- Avoid foods like muffins, crackers and rice that break down into little pieces in the mouth.
- If smoothies, milkshakes or liquid nutrition supplements are hard to swallow or they coat your mouth, make them thinner by adding ice, water or skim milk.

Did you know?

A dry mouth can lead to tooth decay. To avoid mouth problems such as cavities, clean your mouth and teeth at least 4 times each day. Use a soft-bristle toothbrush rinsed in hot water to soften the bristles. Your healthcare team may recommend a fluoride toothpaste, rinse or gel. Do not use a mouthwash that contains alcohol. It may dry your mouth even more.

"The radiation dried up my saliva glands. Now when I eat drier foods, I really have to wash them down. I try to avoid dry foods like pork chops or roast beef. The best foods are spaghetti, which goes down easy, soups and cooked vegetables. What I learned was, I could eat the majority of things, but the eating process is slow. I have to chew my food much longer, take smaller forkfuls and take a sip of water or tea after almost every mouthful." – Dante

Sore mouth and throat

Some cancer treatments can cause you to have a sore mouth and throat. Talk to your healthcare team if a sore mouth and throat is making it difficult for you to eat or drink. They can recommend medicines to make chewing and swallowing less painful.

If you have a sore mouth and throat, these tips can help:

- Eat soft, bland food that is cool or lukewarm rather than very hot or cold.
- Cook foods until they are soft and tender so you can mash them easily. Or cut foods into very small pieces.
- Use a blender or food processor to mash or purée foods.
- Avoid hot or cold drinks.
- Try soup, mashed potatoes, yogurt, eggs, custard, pudding, cooked cereals, ice cream, casseroles, milkshakes and liquid nutrition supplements.
- Drink with a straw.
- Avoid acidic juices like apple or orange. They may hurt your mouth. If you drink juice, try less acidic options, such as peach, pear or apricot.
- Avoid alcohol.
- Limit foods that are tart, salty or spicy or have rough edges (like toast and tortilla chips).
- Rinse your mouth often. Try a few different rinses to see what works best for you. Ask your healthcare team or pharmacist to recommend mouthwashes that are alcohol-free and can soothe a sore mouth and throat.

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"I had a couple of times when I could feel mouth sores starting. It felt like when you bite the inside of your mouth really hard. Anything I ate after that would sting so I wanted to get rid of it as fast as I could. I started rinsing with warm water and salt. That got rid of it." – Zara

Did you know?

You can make your own mouthwash. A couple of shakes of salt or baking soda mixed with water or club soda is cheaper than store-bought mouthwashes.

Swallowing problems

During cancer treatment, you may find it harder to swallow. Difficulty swallowing is also called dysphagia. Some types of cancer or cancer treatments can affect the head and neck and make it hard or painful to swallow. You may gag, cough or choke when you try to swallow. Or you may feel like food is stuck in your throat.

Difficulty swallowing can affect your ability to eat and drink. Talk to your healthcare team if you're coughing or feel like you're choking when you eat or drink. You may need a swallowing assessment to figure out which foods and drinks are best for you.

If you have trouble swallowing, these tips may help:

- Try a soft diet. Talk to your dietitian for information.
- Cut food into small, bite-sized pieces to make them easier to chew.
- Take small bites of food and completely swallow each bite before starting the next one.
- Try different food textures to see which is easiest to swallow. Foods with a smooth texture like mashed potatoes are often easiest.
- Add gravy or sauces to foods to make them easier to swallow. Soften dry, crisp foods like crackers or biscuits by dipping them into milk, coffee or tea.
- Avoid hard and dry foods, such as potato chips or pretzels.
- Use a blender or food processor to chop foods that are hard to chew. Use fruit or vegetable juices, broth or milk to blend the food together.
- Make every mouthful count by choosing foods that are high in protein and high in calories. Try to not eat foods or drink fluids that contain a lot of sugar. They can contribute to tooth decay, especially if you have a dry mouth.
- Limit spicy foods and hot spices like chili powder, cayenne pepper or spicy curry powder. These can irritate the inside of the mouth and throat.

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Did you know?

Meals on Wheels and other meal delivery services offer puréed meal options. You can choose these if you have trouble swallowing and your dietitian or a speech therapist recommends a soft, minced or puréed diet.

Heartburn and reflux

Heartburn and reflux can leave a burning feeling in your throat and upper stomach or a sour taste in your mouth. Heartburn is uncomfortable and may make you lose your appetite. It can also cause nausea and vomiting. Your healthcare team may suggest medicines to help relieve these symptoms.

You may find it helpful to limit:

- spicy foods
- high-fat foods, such as potato chips, French fries and cream sauces
- acidic foods, such as citrus fruit and tomato products
- alcohol
- caffeine from soft drinks, coffee, tea and chocolate

These tips may also help with heartburn and reflux:

- Eat small meals often rather than larger meals 3 times a day.
- Try not to lie down right after eating.
- Wait 2 to 3 hours after eating before going to bed.
- When lying down, keep your head and shoulders propped up with an extra pillow.

Food safety

Everyone should take care when handling and cooking food. But when you have cancer, you need to be even more careful. That's because cancer and cancer treatments such as chemotherapy and radiation therapy can weaken your immune system. Your immune system is the part of your body that fights off harmful bacteria and other germs.

Foods may contain bacteria when they are not grown, cooked or stored properly. They can make you sick. A weak immune system makes it harder for your body to fight against bacteria in food.

In the grocery store and at home

Take these steps to make sure your food is safe.

Shopping

- Do not buy food past its "best before" or expiry date.
- Buy juice, milk and dairy products that are pasteurized.
- Keep raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs separate from other foods in your grocery cart.
- Check eggs before you buy them. Avoid eggs with cracked shells.
- Pick up cold foods last. Go right home from the store and put them in the fridge.
- Never leave cold food in your hot car.
- Avoid vegetables or fruit that have been cut at the grocery store (such as melon).
- Do not buy damaged, swollen, dented or rusty canned foods.
- Wash your hands with warm, soapy water for 20 seconds when you get home. Wash again after you put your groceries away.
- Wash your reusable shopping bags often, especially after using them for any fresh foods. Bits of food and bacteria can end up in your bags. Cloth bags can usually be washed in the washing machine,

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and others can be handwashed inside out with hot, soapy water. Use separate shopping bags for raw meat, poultry, seafood and eggs or put them in disposable bags (in case they drip).

Storing

- Keep cold foods in the fridge at or below 4°C (40°F).
- Keep frozen foods in the freezer at or below –18°C (0°F).
- Use defrosted foods right away. Do not refreeze them.
- Store raw meat, poultry and seafood packages on a plate to prevent any juices from dripping onto other foods in the fridge. Don't store them on the top shelf since juices can drip down.

Cooking

- Wash your hands for 20 seconds with warm, soapy water before you cook. Wash them again after touching raw meat, poultry, seafood or eggs.
- Wash countertops and all cooking utensils with warm, soapy water before and after you use them. This is especially important when using raw meat, poultry, seafood or eggs.
- Do not cut raw meat and then vegetables with the same knife or cutting board. Wash knives and cutting boards with hot, soapy water between uses.
- Wash and dry the lids of canned foods before opening.
- If barbecuing, use a clean plate for the cooked meat, poultry, fish or seafood. Do not put these cooked foods on the same plate or tray that held the raw food. You must wash it with hot, soapy water before you use it again.
- Use different spoons for tasting and for stirring while you cook. Don't lick the spoon then put it back in the pot.
- Use dishcloths or paper towels to clean spills. If you use dishcloths, launder them in the hot cycle after every use.
- Put leftovers in the fridge or freezer as soon as you're done eating. Put hot foods, uncovered, in the refrigerator to cool. Place in sealed storage containers after cooling.

Safe cooking temperatures

Meat, poultry and seafood may contain bacteria, which is killed by heat. Make sure to cook them to their correct internal temperatures.

Important: You cannot tell if your food is cooked to the right temperature just by looking at it. You need to test it with a meat thermometer. Make sure to poke the thermometer right into the centre of what you're cooking.

Category	Safe internal temperature
MEAT	
Beef, veal or lamb – ground	71°C (160°F)
Beef, veal or lamb – whole cuts or pieces	Cook until it's at least medium-rare 63°C (145°F) medium 71°C (160°F) well done 77°C (170°F)
Pork – whole cuts or pieces	71°C (160°F)
Wild game (such as elk, moose, venison, rabbit) – whole cuts or pieces	74°C (165°F)
POULTRY (such as chicken, turkey, duck, goose, pheasant)	
Ground or pieces (wings, breasts, legs, thighs)	74°C (165°F)
Whole	82°C (180°F)
SEAFOOD	
Fish	70°C (158°F)
Shellfish (shrimp, lobster, crab, scallops, clams, mussels, oysters)	74°C (165°F)

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Food and drinks to avoid

Some foods put you at greater risk of food poisoning. Check with the dietitian at your cancer centre about your treatment plan and blood cell counts, and whether you should avoid certain foods. Restricted foods may include:

- raw eggs or foods made with raw eggs such as homemade eggnog or Caesar salad dressing
- raw fish, smoked fish (lox or gravlax), sushi and uncooked oysters
- home-canned vegetables, fruit or meat
- cold hot dogs or deli lunch meat (heat these foods until they are steaming hot)
- refrigerated pâté
- raw vegetable sprouts such as alfalfa sprouts, bean sprouts, broccoli sprouts
- foods that are not pasteurized, such as apple cider, fresh juices or raw milk
- soft or mouldy cheese such as Brie, Camembert, Roquefort, Gorgonzola and blue cheese
- things in your fridge if you don't know how long they have been stored there
- foods from buffets, salad bars, bulk bins, street fairs or sidewalk vendors
- cream- or custard-filled desserts that are stored at room temperature
- ice cream or frozen yogurt that comes from soft-serve machines
- water straight from lakes, rivers, streams or springs
- well water, unless tested yearly and found safe

7 questions and answers about food safety

1. *How long can I store cooked foods in the fridge?*
   Leftovers can be kept in the fridge for 3 to 4 days.

2. *Can I eat foods with a bit of mould if I scrape it off?*
   No. Do not eat foods with signs of mould.

3. *Do I need to rinse my chicken before I cook it?*
   No. Rinsing can leave bacteria in the sink and countertops. It's better to cook it without rinsing it first.

4. *Do I need to wash vegetables and fruit with vinegar, baking soda or a special spray?*
   No. Wash vegetables and fruit thoroughly under running water. If they have rough surfaces (like cantaloupe), scrub them before cutting.

5. *What's the best way to thaw frozen meat?*
   Thaw meat, poultry and seafood in the fridge. Or defrost them in the microwave. Do not leave them sitting on the counter to thaw.

6. *Is it OK to eat runny scrambled or soft-boiled eggs?*
   No. Eggs should be cooked hard, not runny. Enjoy hard-boiled eggs, omelets, quiche, frittata or well-cooked scrambled eggs.

7. *Can I eat bruised fruit?*
   You should cut away any bruised or damaged areas. Bacteria can thrive in these places.

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Physical activity

You may not always feel like being active. But exercise really can help you feel better, which can lead to eating better. Many doctors now encourage people with cancer to be active. That's because physical activity can:

- boost your appetite
- ease constipation, nausea and fatigue
- reduce anxiety and depression
- help you sleep better
- support your immune system
- ease pain
- boost self-esteem
- help with recovery after treatment
- improve quality of life
- help regain strength and muscle
- reduce stress
- keep your heart and lungs healthy
- reduce the risk of heart disease and type 2 diabetes

Be safe and have fun

How much exercise you can do will depend on your overall health, how you cope with treatment and what side effects you have.

Check in with your healthcare team before getting started. They can let you know what type of activity is safe for you and how quickly you can increase your activity level. You may get specific exercises to follow as part of your recovery. Gentle exercise such as slow walks, stretching and swimming are usually OK to start with. But if you're planning to get back to something vigorous, such as lifting weights or playing a contact sport, your healthcare team needs to know.

An exercise program needs to be right for you. It should be safe, effective and fun. Being physically active doesn't have to mean playing a sport or going to a gym. It could be biking, gardening or dancing. If you've never been very active before, start slowly. And when you don't feel like you can exercise, go easy on yourself. The goal is to be as active as you can comfortably be.

Did you know?

Some activity is better than none. Try to build up to at least 30 minutes of moderate activity every day or almost every day. Try 3 separate sessions of 10 minutes each if 30 minutes all at once is too much for you.

If you're not sure what kind of physical activity is right for you or you'd like help adjusting what you did in the past, talk to your healthcare team. You may be able to join a rehabilitation or exercise program staffed by physiotherapists and other healthcare professionals at your cancer centre.

The exercise specialist may recommend that you get some cardio and do some strength exercises. Cardio gets your heart rate up. Try walking, dancing or swimming. Strength exercises build muscle. They can be done using resistance bands or weights, or even water bottles or cans of food. You can also do strength exercises that use your own body weight, such as squats or push-ups.

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Tips for being active

- Don't set goals that are too big. Start with small goals and work toward them bit by bit.
- Choose something you enjoy doing. Almost any activity can be adjusted to your fitness level.
- Try exercising with a friend to make it even more fun.
- Be active when your energy level is highest.
- Walk indoors at a mall when the weather is bad.
- Park farther away from the doctor's office or grocery store to get in a short walk. Even a few extra steps can add up.
- If you need to stay in bed during your recovery, try small activities like stretching or moving your arms and legs. It can help you feel better, stay flexible and relieve muscle tension.

Eating well after treatment

Once you've finished treatment and the side effects have eased off, your interest in food will probably return. It can be a slow process. Be patient if you don't get back to your usual eating habits right away. Your body needs a lot of time to recover. Your dietitian can help you develop an eating plan that works for you as you continue to heal.

> "Remember that even though you have finished treatment, your body is still healing. Your food preferences may have changed. Be patient with yourself and increase the variety of foods you eat gradually. Continue to get protein at each meal and start to add in more vegetables and fruit as you are able to."
> – Caitlin Wallis, RD (oncology dietitian)

Eating well after treatment can help you in many ways. It can help you regain strength, rebuild healthy cells and reduce your risk of cancer, heart disease, type 2 diabetes and osteoporosis (weak bones). Over time, eating well will help you feel better.

These tips can help you eat well after treatment:

- Follow Canada's Food Guide to plan your meals and get all the nutrients you need. Eat lots of vegetables and fruit, get enough protein and choose whole grains.
- Eat foods you used to enjoy. Keep trying.
- Make an inviting meal setting, whatever that means to you. Light candles or play music or use your best dishes. You could spread out a blanket and have a picnic.
- Share a meal with friends or family. You can even ask them to bring the food.

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Can eating well reduce the risk of cancer coming back?

Your risk of cancer coming back (recurring) or developing in another part of the body depends on many things, including:

- the type of cancer
- the stage of the cancer when you were first diagnosed
- your age when you were first diagnosed

To find out more about your risk, talk to your healthcare team.

You may wonder whether getting certain nutrients or following a special diet can reduce the risk of cancer coming back. Researchers have looked at this, but there is still a lot to learn. What research tells us so far is that people who have had cancer can try to follow the same cancer prevention recommendations as people who have not had cancer.

Many people are motivated to make changes to their old eating habits once they are feeling better after treatment. You may choose to develop some new eating patterns. Making these food choices – if you can and when you are ready – helps reduce your risk of cancer.

Eat lots of vegetables, fruit and fibre. Most of us only get about half the fibre we need. Fibre is in vegetables and fruit. It's also in whole grains, beans, peas, lentils, nuts and seeds. Canada's Food Guide recommends that half your meal is vegetables and fruit and one-quarter of your meal is whole grains.

Have no more than 3 servings of red meat a week. Examples of red meat are beef, pork, lamb, veal and goat. A serving is 85 grams or 3 ounces when cooked. That's a bit smaller than a deck of cards.

Avoid processed meat. Ham, bacon, salami, hot dogs and sausages are examples of processed meats. Processed meat is any meat preserved by smoking, curing or salting or by adding preservatives. When meat is preserved in these ways, cancer-causing substances can be formed. If you eat processed meats, try to do so only once in a while. Or if you can, avoid them.

Limit foods with added sugar. Remember that sugar itself does not cause cancer. But eating lots of sugary foods may lead to high blood sugar levels and weight gain, which may increase hormone levels (such as insulin and estrogen). These hormones are linked to an increased risk of developing some types of cancer and may influence cancer cell growth.

Limit alcohol. To reduce your cancer risk, it's best not to drink alcohol. *Canada's Guidance on Alcohol and Health* outlines the health risks of alcohol and can help you make an informed decision on whether you drink and how much. If you choose to drink alcohol, keep your cancer risk as low as possible by having no more than 2 standard drinks a week. The less alcohol you drink, the lower your cancer risk.

One standard drink is:

- a 341 mL (12 oz) bottle of beer (5% alcohol)
- a 142 mL (5 oz) glass of wine (12% alcohol)
- a 43 mL (1.5 oz) shot of spirits (40% alcohol)

It's important to understand that living a healthier lifestyle does not guarantee a cancer-free future. And it is just as important to understand that no one deserves cancer. Not following the recommendations on how to lower your cancer risk does not mean that it is your fault if cancer develops.

FIND OUT MORE

To find out about other ways you can reduce your risk of cancer, visit cancer.ca/prevention.

You can also find information about living well after cancer at cancer.ca/living-with-cancer/life-after-treatment.

Our booklet *Life after Cancer Treatment* can help you develop healthy goals and a wellness plan.

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Living with advanced cancer

If you're living with advanced cancer, you will have different challenges in trying to eat well and maintain your body weight.

Talk to your healthcare team about ways to meet your nutritional needs. Eating well will help you feel better, keep up your strength and cope with side effects like fatigue.

Finding good information

It's empowering to search for answers about cancer and nutrition. But there's a problem – not all of the information you find is reliable. This can be very confusing, especially if what you learn is different from what your doctor or dietitian told you. Cancer is complex. And wading through cancer information is even more complex. This section will help you find sources that you can trust and rely on.

Questions to ask about nutrition news

When you hear new information about cancer and nutrition, don't make any quick decisions. (This is also true for cancer information in general.) First ask these questions:

- If this news were true, wouldn't my doctor or dietitian tell me about it?
- Who is providing this information?
- Does the source have a strong background in cancer research?
- Is it just a random thing that worked for someone? Or is it based on science?
- Can the information be traced to research in a respected medical journal?
- Can I read more about the topic from the original source?

If you want to dig deeper, look for the original source of the information. Once you find the original source, ask these questions:

- Where was the research published? In a reliable journal or on some random website?
- Who paid for the research to be done?
- Who are the researchers and what are their credentials?
- Do the researchers have a bias? Do they benefit from the claims being made in any way?
- Is the new information based on one small study? Or many large studies?

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- What kind of research was it? Was it conducted with humans, animals or in test tubes? If humans, was it a small or large group of people?
- Have experts agreed with the new research and adopted it as part of their guidelines?
- What does my doctor or dietitian think of the new research?

You do not need to change your eating habits based on each new study. Research is published to build a library of information about a topic. Researchers will redo a study many times to see if the findings are consistent. Cancer guidelines from organizations like the Canadian Cancer Society and from your healthcare team are based on thousands of studies and do not change when one new study comes out (because … what if that one study is flawed?).

Did you know?

A single study is not enough to prove something is related to cancer. Researchers often combine data from many small studies so they can learn more about a topic.

Instead of changing your lifestyle every time a study is published, rely on research and guidelines from:

- your healthcare team
- Canadian Cancer Society: cancer.ca
- World Cancer Research Fund: wcrf.org
- American Institute for Cancer Research: aicr.org
- American Cancer Society: cancer.org
- National Comprehensive Cancer Network: nccn.org
- National Cancer Institute: cancer.gov
- American Society of Clinical Oncology: cancer.net

WHO'S POSTING WHAT?

Have you joined online support groups and talked to other people who have cancer? Maybe you use social media to connect and learn. It's great to stay informed, but don't believe everything you see and hear. Social media pages and online support groups are user-generated. That means that anyone can post anything about nutrition and cancer, whether it is true or not.

Some groups – for example, CancerConnection.ca – are moderated. This helps to make sure that conversations are respectful, and it also means that reliable sources of information like cancer.ca are shared when necessary. Sometimes online discussions are led by an expert in a cancer topic, such as a dietitian or social worker. It's good to understand the set-up of the site where you are getting support and information.

Words to watch out for

News headlines and for-profit websites are designed to catch your attention. They use words and phrases that are exciting. But they may not always be truthful. Be wary of phrases that make certain remedies sound too good to be true. Words to question include:

- miracle cure
- wonder drug
- breakthrough
- natural cure
- what your doctor doesn't want you to know
- guaranteed or your money back
- secret
- magic
- detox
- superfood
- boost immunity
- cleanse
- restore
- purify
- reduce toxins

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For caregivers

As a caregiver, you may be doing the grocery shopping, meal prep and cooking. This is a tough job. Whether you have always been the cook in your home, or this is a new role for you, it can be challenging.

What can you expect?

You may find that the person with cancer likes a food one day but doesn't like the same food a few days later. Their tastes can change quickly. There may be days when they only want a favourite food and other days when they eat nothing at all. These are all normal reactions to cancer treatment.

But these things may be hard for you to deal with. If you don't like to cook but have to, you might feel unhappy or angry about it. If the food you've prepared is not eaten, you might feel hurt. Try your best to stay positive. Things will get better. Try to be patient and stay calm.

Before you prepare meals, ask the person you are caring for what they feel like eating. It can change from day to day. It will save you time if you make what they want to eat, rather than what you want them to eat.

Try to remember that you're there to help. You do not want to add stress or pressure to the person with cancer. You should never try to force them to eat or make them feel bad if they don't eat what you have cooked. Work together as a team. Sometimes the simplest things work best. Cooking a meal and eating it together, for example, can be a great way to show you care.

> "My best advice is to listen to them, respect what they're telling you and let them feel that they're in control. Suggest things to eat but don't come across as a sergeant. That really doesn't work." – Holly (caregiver)

Tips to help when caregiving

- Talk to each other about ways to manage eating issues. Be open and honest.
- Accept that the person you're caring for may not be able to eat much. Offer gentle support. This is much more helpful than pushing someone to eat.
- Don't blame yourself or the person who has cancer if they don't eat.
- Make meals that are simple and easy to prepare. If they are not eaten, it won't bother you as much.
- Be flexible about mealtimes rather than trying to keep to old routines.
- Keep food within easy reach and offer smaller meals and snacks throughout the day.
- Try serving a larger breakfast. Some people have a better appetite in the morning.
- Offer a bedtime snack.
- Keep plenty of liquids available. Suggest clear liquids and thicker liquids like smoothies if the person you're caring for doesn't have an appetite.

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Notes

WE'RE HERE TO HELP

Find information you can trust
Visit cancer.ca for information on more than 100 cancer types. You'll find topics ranging from diagnosis and treatment to managing side effects, living with cancer and reducing your risk. We also have publications, videos and webinars.

Get answers to your questions
When you have questions about diagnosis, treatment, prevention, emotional support and other services, our trained cancer information specialists can help you find answers. Call us at 1-888-939-3333. Our Cancer Information Helpline is available in English and French with an interpreter service for other languages.

Connect with someone who's been there
Visit CancerConnection.ca to join our moderated online community. You can join discussion groups, get support and help others at the same time. It's a safe place to connect, learn and share your experience with cancer.

Find services in your community
Our Community Services Locator (CSL) helps you find the cancer-related services you need. You can search over 4,500 listings across Canada for emotional support programs, home care, help getting to your cancer treatment, where to find a wig or prosthesis and much more. Start your search at cancer.ca/csl.

The Canadian Cancer Society works tirelessly to save and improve lives. We raise funds to fuel the brightest minds in cancer research. We provide a compassionate support system for all those affected by cancer, across Canada and for all types of cancer. Together with patients, supporters, donors and volunteers, we work to create a healthier future for everyone.

Because to take on cancer, it takes all of us. It takes a society.

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