

## Loosing Weight?

Cancer treatments can cause multiple different side effects including nausea, vomiting, decreased appetite, diarrhea, constipation, and changes in the way you taste or smell food. An outcome of these side effects may be a loss of weight.

With weight loss you may need to change what you eat. You may need more calories and protein and more or less fiber. Once treatment ends, and side effects start to ease, you may be able to gain back what you lost. However, during treatment, it is important that you get the best nutrition possible. Healthy eating can boost your immune system, repair damaged tissue, make you feel better, and help you get through treatment.

### Getting the most from your meals

When you don't feel like eating, large meals can seem overwhelming or unappealing. These suggestions may help you get enough calories:

- Eat small meals 6-8 times/day instead of 3.
- Drink high calorie beverages like nutrition shakes, fruit juices, milkshakes, smoothies.
- Eat your favorite foods and snacks, or what you want, at any time of the day.
- Include different colors and textures of foods in your meals for more appeal.
- Make dining a good experience by eating your meals in a pleasant, relaxing setting with family or friends.

Content adapted from websites below.

When being treated for cancer, it is very important for you to get enough calories and increase your protein intake. Doing both will help you to maintain your weight and will help you heal. Staying hydrated is also important, increasing your fluid intake will make you feel better.

### Tips for adding more protein in your diet:

- Eat foods rich in protein, such as chicken, fish, pork, beef, lamb, eggs, milk, cheese, beans, nuts and tofu.
- Drink Double Milk or Nutrition Shake type supplements, use in cereals.
- Add powdered milk to cream soups, mashed potatoes, milkshakes, casseroles.
- Snack on cheese, nuts or nut butters (peanut, cashew, and almond butter) with crackers or eat with apples, bananas, or celery.
- Blend a nut butter into your shakes and smoothies.
- Snack on nuts, sunflower, pumpkin, or chia seeds, hummus with pita bread.
- Add cooked meats, cheese and beans to soups, casseroles, salads, omelets.
- Add wheat germ or ground flax seeds to cereals, casseroles, yogurt.

### Tips for adding more calories to your diet

- Don't eat foods that are fat-free, low fat, reduced in fat or diet. With dairy products, use full fat instead of skim.
- Snack on dried fruits, nuts, or seeds. Add to hot cereals, ice cream, or salads.
- Add butter, margarine, or oils to potatoes, rice, and pasta. Add to cooked vegetables, sandwiches, toast, and hot cereals.
- Add cream cheese to toast or bagels or use it as a spread on vegetables. Spread cream cheese and jam or peanut butter and jelly on crackers, add jelly or honey to breads and crackers.
- Mix jam with diced fruit, use as a topping for ice cream, yogurt, pancakes.
- Snack on tortilla chips with guacamole. Add avocado to salads.
- Use high-calorie dressings on salads, baked potatoes, and on chilled cooked vegetables, such as green beans or asparagus.
- Add sour cream, half and half, or heavy cream to mashed potatoes and other recipes that use dairy such as pancakes, sauces, gravies, soups, & casseroles.
- Top waffles, French toast, fruits, puddings, hot chocolate with whipped cream.
- Make vegetables or pasta with cream sauces.
- Use mayonnaise, creamy salad dressing, or aioli sauce in salads, sandwiches, and vegetable dips.
- Mix granola with yogurt or put it on top of ice cream or fruits.
- Drink high-calorie, high-protein drinks, such as Carnation Breakfast Essentials<sup>®</sup> or Ensure<sup>®</sup> or other brands of nutrition shakes.

## Resources for Additional Information:

- [American Cancer Society, Drinking and Eating Changes](#)
- [Cancer.Net, Appetite Loss](#)
- [Cancer.Net, Weight Loss](#)
- [NIH, Nutrition in Cancer Care \(PDQ<sup>®</sup>\)](#)
- [ASCO Answers Fact Sheet, Appetite Loss](#)
- [Chemocare, Weight Changes](#)
- [Memorial Sloan Kettering Eating Well During Your Cancer Treatment](#)
- [CancerCare.org, Coping With appetite and Weight Changes](#)

## Food Resources

- [Greater Chicago Food Depository](#) (773) 247-3663
- [Illinois Department of Human Services, Cash, SNAP & Medical Assistance](#) (800) 843-6154
- [City of Chicago, Community Service Center Location](#)

## Recursos en Español:

- [American Cancer Society, Cambios en el apetito](#)
- [Cancer.Net, Pérdida de peso](#)
- [NIH, La nutrición en el tratamiento del cáncer \(PDQ<sup>®</sup>\)](#)
- [Chemocare, Falta de apetito y saciedad temprana pro vocadas por el cáncer y la quimioterapia](#)