

Ready to start planning your care? Call us at [800-525-2225](tel:800-525-2225) to make an appointment.

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Memorial Sloan Kettering  
Cancer Center

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Stevia is a natural sweetener. It's made from the leaves of *Stevia rebaudiana*, a plant in the sunflower family.

Stevia supplements come as liquid extracts, powders, and tablets.

## What are the potential uses and benefits?

Stevia is used to:

- Sweeten foods and beverages
- Lower high blood pressure
- Help you lose weight
- Treat diabetes

Stevia also has other uses, but doctors have not studied them to see if they work.

It's generally safe to use stevia as a sweetener. Talk with your healthcare provider before taking stevia supplements. Herbal supplements are stronger than the herbs you would use in cooking.

Supplements can also interact with some medications and affect how they work. For more information, read the "What else do I need to know?" section below.

## What are the side effects?

Side effects of stevia may include:

- Nausea (feeling like you're going to throw up)
- Stomach fullness

## What else do I need to know?

- Talk with your healthcare provider if you're pregnant or breastfeeding. Stevia may not be safe for you.
- Talk with your healthcare provider if you're taking medications to lower your blood pressure. Stevia also lowers blood pressure so taking both at the same time may not be safe.
- Talk with your healthcare provider if you're taking medications to lower your blood sugar. Stevia also lowers blood sugar so taking both at the same time may not be safe.
- Do not take stevia if you're allergic to sunflowers, marigolds, ragweed, or other plants from the sunflower family.

If you have any questions, contact a member of your care team directly. If you're a patient at MSK and you need to reach a provider after 5 p.m., during the weekend, or on a holiday, call 212-639-2000.

For more resources, visit [www.mskcc.org/pe](http://www.mskcc.org/pe) to search our virtual library.

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