



## PATIENT & CAREGIVER EDUCATION

# Eating Well During Your Cancer Treatment

This information will help you get the nutrients you need during your cancer treatment. It explains ways to add calories, protein, and liquid to your diet. It also explains how different cancer treatments may affect your eating and what you can do to help manage side effects.

## Nutrition during your cancer treatment

Good nutrition is very important. There are some changes you can make now that will help you during treatment. Start by following a healthy diet. A healthy diet during treatment means eating foods that give your body the nutrition it needs. This can make you stronger, help you stay at a healthy weight, and help you fight infection. It may also help you prevent or manage some side effects of treatment.

Do not follow restrictive or fad diets during treatment. Ask your Registered Dietitian Nutritionist (RDN) if you have any questions about avoiding certain foods.

To schedule an appointment with an RDN, call 212-639-7312. Appointments are available in person, by phone, or by telehealth.

## Tips for making eating easier

1. Aim for 6 to 8 small (fist sized) meals and snacks throughout the day. This may be easier to manage than 3 large meals.
2. Choose ready-to-eat (pre-made) foods or meals that do not involve much cooking or preparation.
3. Swap water for drinks with calories and protein. Fruit juices are usually easy to drink and may perk up your taste for other foods. You can also try nutrition supplement drinks, shakes, or smoothies.
4. Don't be afraid to ask for help. Allow friends and family to prepare meals or shop for you. Be sure to tell them if there are certain foods that you can't eat very well or

don't like. Make sure the proper food safety guidelines are used in preparation, delivery, and storage. Ask your RDN about home delivery services. For more information, read *Food Safety During Cancer Treatment* ([www.mskcc.org/pe/food-safety](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/food-safety)).

5. Add movement as much as your doctor allows. You can try walking, stretching, resistance training, gardening, or sitting outside to get some sunlight.

## Tips for getting enough calories and protein

Your RDN may suggest certain foods to help you get more calories and protein or eat more comfortably. Some of these foods may seem like less healthy choices, but all foods can help to nourish you. Below are some suggestions on ways to increase calories and protein in your diet.

### Use high calorie, high fat foods

- Add olive oil or butter to recipes and meals
- Use whole fat dairy (such as whole milk, cheese, or sour cream)
- Try avocado, nut butters (such as peanut butter or almond butter), and other nuts. You can also try seeds (such as pistachios, cashews, pumpkin seeds, or hemp seeds)
- Use Double Milk (recipe below) instead of regular milk or water

### Drink liquids with extra calories

- Fruit nectars or juices
- Milk or milk substitutes
- Homemade shakes
- Smoothies
- Premade yogurt drinks or kefir

### Eat foods rich in protein

- Chicken, fish, pork, beef, or lamb
- Eggs
- Milk
- Cheese

- Beans
- Nuts or nut butters
- Soy foods
- Pasteurized bone broth for soups and stews

## **Enjoy desserts**

- Pound cake
- Puddings
- Custards
- Cheesecakes
- Top with whipped cream for extra calories

## **Pair fruits and vegetables with protein**

- Apple slices with peanut butter
- Carrot sticks with a cheese stick
- Pita bread and hummus

## **Add extra nutrition to recipes**

- Add unflavored protein powder to creamy soups, mashed potatoes, shakes, and casseroles.
- Snack on dried fruits, nuts, and seeds.
- Add wheat germ, ground nuts, chia seeds, or ground flax seeds to cereals, casseroles, and yogurt.
- Add sour cream, coconut milk, half and half, or heavy cream to mashed potatoes, cake, and cookie recipes. You can also add it to pancake batter, sauces, gravies, soups, and casseroles.
- Make vegetables or pasta with cream sauces or drizzle olive oil over these foods before eating.

# Managing symptoms and side effects with nutrition

People can have different symptoms. You may have one or many, while others may have none.

This section describes some tips you can use to help you with:

- Appetite loss
- Constipation (having fewer bowel movements than usual)
- Diarrhea (having loose or watery bowel movements)
- Dry mouth
- Sore mouth or throat
- Taste changes
- Early satiety (feel full shortly after you start eating)
- Nausea (feeling like you're going to throw up) and vomiting (throwing up)
- Reflux
- Fatigue (feeling more tired or weak than usual)

**Tell your healthcare provider if you have any of the symptoms above before following these tips.**

Diet changes can help manage your side effects, but you may also need medicine. If you're prescribed medicine, be sure to take it as advised by your healthcare provider.

## Appetite loss

Appetite loss is a decrease in your desire to eat. It's a very common side effect of cancer treatments.

Below are some tips to help manage appetite loss with diet.

### Key Tips

- Eat small amounts of food often throughout the day instead of 3 large meals.
- Eat by a schedule. For example, eat every 2 hours or so instead of waiting to feel hungry.
- Use timers or alarms as reminders for meal and snack times.
- Choose calorie and protein dense foods. See “Getting Enough Calories and Protein” section of this packet for examples.
- Choose high calorie and protein shakes, smoothies, or other drinks if a meal sounds like it would be too much
- Avoid drinking large amounts (more than 4 to 6 ounces) of liquids with your meals. This can make you feel too full.
- Move around when possible. Light physical activity can help boost your appetite.

## Nausea and vomiting

Nausea can be caused by radiation therapy, chemotherapy, or surgery. It can also be caused by pain, medication, infection, or stress.

If you’re vomiting, try your best to follow the suggestions in this section. Be sure to keep yourself well hydrated with electrolyte-rich drinks. Read the “Staying hydrated” section earlier in this resource for examples.

Ask your healthcare provider if you need an antiemetic (medication to prevent or treat nausea and vomiting). Below are suggestions for managing your nausea through your diet.

### Key Tips

- Eat 6 small meals and snacks instead of 3 large meals.
- Try not to skip meals. An empty stomach can make nausea worse.
- Try eating crackers, dry cereal, or toast before getting out of bed in the morning.
- Try cold or room temperature foods if the smell of hot food makes nausea worse.
- Foods to choose: Dry toast, pretzels, crackers, bagels, pasta, rice, potatoes, yogurt, cheese, gelatin, popsicles, baked meats, fish, or poultry, eggs, and soup.
- Foods to avoid: High fat, fried, spicy or greasy foods can make nausea worse.
- Sip on liquids throughout the day. Clear liquids may be easiest such as apple juice, ginger ale, broths, ginger or mint teas.

For more information, read *Managing Nausea and Vomiting* ([www.mskcc.org/pe/nausea\\_vomiting](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/nausea_vomiting))

## Constipation

Constipation is having less bowel movements than usual. If you're constipated, your bowel movements might be:

- Too hard
- Too small
- Hard to get out
- Less often than usual

Constipation can be caused by many things, including your diet, activity, and lifestyle. Some chemotherapy and pain medications can also cause constipation.

Take any medications for managing constipation as advised by your healthcare provider. Below are ways to manage constipation through your diet.

### Key Tips

- Eat more high fiber foods, such as beans, whole grains, fruits, vegetables, nuts and seeds.
- Drink plenty of liquids, at least 8 to 10 cups daily. Warm liquids, such as hot teas, can help start a bowel movement.
- Try to eat at the same time each day.
- Increase your physical activity. Talk with your healthcare provider before doing this.

## Diarrhea

Diarrhea is a loose or watery bowel movement (poop), having more bowel movements than what's normal for you, or both. It is when food passes quickly through your intestines. When this happens, water and nutrients aren't absorbed well by your body.

Diarrhea can be caused by:

- Cancer treatment and other medications
- Stomach, intestine, or pancreas surgery
- Food sensitivity

Take anti-diarrheal medications as told by your health care team. Below are ways to help manage diarrhea with your diet.

### Key Tips

- Drink plenty of liquids. Aim to have at least 1 cup of liquid after each loose bowel movement. Read the section “staying hydrated” for examples of liquids to try.
- Eat small frequent meals and snacks.
- Lie down for 30 minutes after eating to help slow digestion.
- Choose food that may help bulk stool such as bananas, rice, applesauce, toast and crackers.
- Avoid raw fruits and vegetables, whole nuts and seeds.
- Avoid high sugar, high fat, and spicy foods. Choose bland foods instead.
- Avoid caffeinated beverages, such as coffee teas, or sodas and alcohol.
- Avoid foods and liquids made with sorbitol, xylitol, or mannitol sugar substitutes. These include some sugar-free candies, baked goods, and diet drinks.

For more information, read *Managing Diarrhea* ([www.mskcc.org/pe/diarrhea](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/diarrhea))

## Dry mouth

A dry mouth can be caused by:

- Chemotherapy
- Radiation therapy
- Medications
- Surgery on the head and neck
- Infections

Dry mouth can increase cavities and tooth decay. It is important to keep your mouth clean, especially when it is dry.

Below are some ways to help manage dry mouth with your diet.

### Key Tips

- Rinse your mouth before and after meals.
  - Use an alcohol-free mouthwash, such as Biotene®. You can also use homemade mouthwash, made of 1 teaspoon baking soda and 1 teaspoon salt in 1 quart (4 cups) of warm water.
- Choose soft foods, such as casseroles, eggs, fish, and stews.
- Use extra sauces, broths, oils, butter and gravies to add moisture to foods.
- Avoid crunchy, dry, and hard foods, such as pretzels, chips, and crackers.
- Drink plenty of liquids throughout the day, at least 8 to 10 cups. These include water, seltzer, juice, and broth.

## Mouth and throat sores

Mouth and throat sores can be caused by certain chemotherapy treatments. They can also be caused by radiation to your head or neck. A sore mouth or throat can make eating difficult. Take any prescribed medications for your mouth and throat as directed by your care team.

Below are some ways to help manage your sore mouth and throat through diet.

### Key Tips

- Cook foods until they are soft and tender. Mashing or pureeing foods may make them easier to eat.
- Avoid foods that may cause pain. These include spicy, salty, acidic, or sour foods.
- Use extra sauces, broths, oils, butter and gravies. These can add moisture to foods.
- Drink through a straw if it feels more comfortable.
- Rinse your mouth often.
  - Use an alcohol-free mouthwash, such as Biotene®. You can also use homemade mouthwash, made of 1 teaspoon baking soda and 1 teaspoon salt in 1 quart (4 cups) of warm water.

## Taste changes

Your sense of taste can be affected by chemotherapy, radiation therapy, and some medications.

Taste is made up of 5 main sensations: salty, sweet, savory, bitter, and sour. Taste changes are different from person to person. The most common changes are having bitter and metallic tastes in your mouth. Sometimes, food may not taste like anything. These changes often go away after your treatment ends.

Below are some ways to help manage taste changes through diet.

### Key Tips

- Rinse your mouth before and after meals.
  - Use an alcohol-free mouthwash such as Biotene® or a homemade mouthwash of 1 teaspoon baking soda and 1 teaspoon salt in 1 quart (4 cups) of warm water.
- If food is tasteless
  - Use more spices and flavorings if they don't create discomfort.
  - Change the texture and temperature of the food.
- If food tastes bitter or metallic
  - Avoid using metal silverware, use plastic or bamboo instead.
  - Avoid canned foods, choose items in plastic or glass instead.
  - Choose protein foods such as chicken, eggs, dairy, tofu, nuts, or beans.
  - Drink sweet or sour drinks such as lemonade, apple juice, or cranberry juice
- If food tastes too sweet
  - Add salt or savory seasonings.
  - Dilute juices or serve over ice.
  - Try adding more acidic foods, such as lemon.
- If food tastes or smells different than usual
  - Avoid protein foods with strong odors, such as beef and fish. Try poultry, eggs, tofu, or dairy products instead.
  - Choose foods that can be eaten cold or at room temperature.
- Open windows or use a fan while cooking.

## Early satiety

Early satiety is when you feel full more quickly than usual when you eat. For example, you may feel like you can't eat any more when you're only halfway through your meal.

Early satiety can be caused by:

- Stomach surgery
- Constipation
- Some medications
- Tumor burden

Below are some ways to help manage early satiety through diet.

### Key Tips

- Eat small frequent meals and snacks.
- Drink most of your liquids before and after meals
- Add foods that are rich in calories and protein to your meals (see “getting enough calories and protein” section of this packet).
- Engage in light physical activity after eating as able. Talk with your healthcare provider before doing this.

## Reflux

GERD (gastroesophageal reflux disease) is when your stomach contents back up into your esophagus. Certain chemotherapy drugs, radiation, and other medication such as steroids can cause reflux.

Your health care team may prescribe you medications to help manage your reflux. Below are some ways to help manage reflux through diet.

### Key Tips

- Eat small frequent meals and snacks instead of large meals.
- Limit or avoid fried and fatty foods, such as hot dogs, bacon, and sausage.
- Avoid alcohol, chocolate, garlic, onions, spicy foods, mints and sweets if they make your reflux worse.
- Stay upright for at least 2 hours after eating.
- Raise the head of your bed if reflux occurs overnight.

## Fatigue

Fatigue is feeling more tired or weak than usual. It’s the most common side effect of cancer and cancer treatments. It may keep you from doing your usual daily activities. It may also impact your quality of life and make it harder for you to handle your treatment.

### Key Tips

- Make larger portions of foods for yourself on days when you have more energy.
  - Freeze individual meal portions for an easy frozen meal on a day you aren’t feeling up for cooking.
- Asking family and friends for help with shopping and making your meals.
- Buy ready-made foods when your energy is low.
- Use grocery or meal delivery options.
- Eat small, frequent, high-calorie meals or snacks.
- Engage in light physical activity as able. Talk with your healthcare provider first.

For more information, read *Managing Your Chemotherapy Side Effects*

([www.mskcc.org/pe/managing\\_chemo\\_side\\_effects](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/managing_chemo_side_effects)) and *Managing Cancer-Related Fatigue* ([www.mskcc.org/pe/managing-fatigue](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/managing-fatigue)).

## Dietary supplements

Dietary supplements include vitamins, minerals, and herbal supplements.

Most people can get the nutrients they need from a balanced diet. Some dietary supplements can also interact with treatments and other medications. **Talk to your MD, RN, or RDN if you are thinking of taking or have any questions about dietary supplements.**

## Food safety

During cancer treatment, your body has a hard time fighting off infection. It's important to make sure that the foods you're eating are safe. This will lower your risk for foodborne illnesses (food poisoning) and other infections. For more information, read *Food Safety During Cancer Treatment* ([www.mskcc.org/pe/food-safety](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/food-safety)).

## Staying hydrated

It's very important to stay hydrated (get enough liquids) during your cancer treatment. You can hydrate with liquids other than water. Examples are listed below:

- Drink soups, bouillon, consommé, or broth.
- Drink seltzer, sparkling water, fruit and vegetable juices, hydration fluids such as Gatorade or Pedialyte, tea, milk or milkshakes (see recommendations below), or hot chocolate.
- Also, eat foods that increase your fluid intake, like gelatin (Jell-O), ice pops, and ice cream or frozen desserts.

## Build your own smoothie or shake

Shakes or smoothies are a great way to boost your nutrition if you can't or do not feel like eating solid foods. You or your caregiver can use the information below to build your own shake or smoothie at home.

For more information, read *Nourishing Smoothie and Hot Latte Recipes* ([www.mskcc.org/pe/smoothies-lattes](http://www.mskcc.org/pe/smoothies-lattes)).

Talk with your RDN about what you should put in your smoothie. You can customize smoothies to your preferences. Here are some suggestions:

<b>Step 1: Pick your base (liquid)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Whole milk or double milk</li> <li>• Fortified non-dairy drink (such as soy milk, oat milk, or coconut milk or almond milk)</li> <li>• Kefir</li> <li>• Orange juice or other juice</li> <li>• Oral nutritional supplement drink (such as Ensure, Orgain, or Kate Farms)</li> </ul>
<b>Step 2: Pick your protein</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Yogurt</li> <li>• Cottage cheese</li> <li>• Silken tofu</li> <li>• Protein powder</li> <li>• Nutritional yeast</li> </ul>
<b>Step 3: Add color</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canned, frozen, or well-washed fruits, such as banana, mango, pineapple, apple, or berries</li> <li>• Canned, frozen, or well-washed vegetables such as, spinach, carrot, sweet potato, or ginger</li> </ul>
<b>Step 4: Add more nutrition</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peanut butter, almond butter, sunflower butter</li> <li>• Seeds, such as sunflower, pumpkin or chia</li> <li>• Avocado</li> </ul>

To make a smoothie, add the liquid to the blender first. Then, add all other ingredients and blend until smooth.

## Double Milk

Ingredients and instructions	Nutritional content
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 quart of whole milk</li> <li>• 1 envelope (about 1 cup) of non-fat dry milk powder (to make 1 quart of product)</li> </ul> Mix in the blender and refrigerate.	Per 8-ounce serving: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 230 calories</li> <li>• 16 grams of protein</li> </ul>

## Regular diet sample menus

Meal	Regular diet sample menu
------	--------------------------

Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 ounces of pear nectar</li> <li>• 1 slice of French toast with ¼ cup chopped nuts, butter, and syrup</li> </ul>
Mid-morning snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5 ounces of peach yogurt with granola</li> <li>• 4 ounces Vanilla Chai Tea Latte (see <i>Nourishing Smoothie and Hot Latte Recipes</i> (<a href="http://www.mskcc.org/pe/smoothies-lattes">www.mskcc.org/pe/smoothies-lattes</a>))</li> </ul>
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ cup of macaroni and cheese with extra cheese grated on top</li> <li>• ½ cup of cauliflower with breadcrumbs sautéed in butter</li> <li>• 4 ounces of apricot nectar</li> </ul>
Afternoon snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 peanut butter and cracker sandwiches</li> <li>• 4 ounces of Double Milk (recipe above)</li> </ul>
Dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 ounces of steak</li> <li>• ½ cup of sautéed green beans with slivered almonds</li> <li>• ½ cup of mashed potatoes</li> <li>• 4 ounces of grape juice</li> </ul>
Evening snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 (2-inch) slice of apple pie</li> <li>• ½ cup of ice cream</li> </ul>

Meal	Regular diet sample menu
Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 egg, cheese and spinach omelet sautéed in butter</li> <li>• 4 ounces of orange juice</li> </ul>
Mid-morning snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ cup of roasted peanuts</li> <li>• ¼ cup dried fruit</li> <li>• 4 oz hot chocolate made with milk</li> </ul>
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 tuna fish sandwich made with mayonnaise</li> <li>• 4 ounces of mango nectar</li> </ul>
Afternoon snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 10 tortilla chips with guacamole</li> <li>• 4 ounces of sweetened iced tea</li> </ul>
Dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6 oz chicken pot pie</li> <li>• 4 ounces of cranberry juice</li> </ul>
Evening snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ cup of rice pudding topped with whipped cream and berries</li> <li>• 4 ounces of hot chocolate made with milk</li> </ul>

Meal	Regular diet sample menu
------	--------------------------

Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 blueberry pancake made with Double Milk or half n' half with butter and syrup</li> <li>• 1 egg</li> <li>• 4 ounces of hot chocolate made with milk</li> </ul>
Mid-morning snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 small apple</li> <li>• 2 tablespoons peanut butter</li> <li>• 4 ounces of sparkling water with a splash of juice</li> </ul>
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1/2 grilled cheese sandwich on whole grain bread</li> <li>• 1/2 cup cream of tomato soup</li> <li>• 4 ounces of cranberry juice</li> </ul>
Afternoon snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 tbsp hummus and 10 pita chips or pretzels</li> <li>• 4 ounces of grape juice</li> </ul>
Dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 cup of baked ziti made with whole-milk ricotta cheese and mozzarella</li> <li>• 1/2 cup of zucchini with garlic and oil</li> <li>• 4 ounces of sparkling water and a splash of juice</li> </ul>
Evening snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1/2 cup of ice cream topped with chocolate syrup, nuts, and whipped cream</li> <li>• 4 ounces of Double Milk (recipe above)</li> </ul>

Meal	Regular diet sample menu
Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1/3 cup of granola</li> <li>• 3/4 cup of Greek yogurt</li> <li>• 4 ounces of apricot nectar</li> </ul>
Mid-morning snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A small muffin with butter or cream cheese and jelly</li> <li>• 4 ounces of Double Milk (recipe above)</li> </ul>
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 (3-inch) wedge of chicken and cheese quesadilla topped with sour cream and salsa and/or avocado</li> <li>• 4 ounces of apple juice</li> </ul>
Afternoon snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1/2 cup of roasted cashews</li> <li>• 1 banana</li> <li>• 4 ounces peach nectar</li> </ul>
Dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2 ounces of fish baked in a red onion vinaigrette</li> <li>• 1 small baked potato topped with sour cream and chives</li> <li>• 1/2 cup of green beans and carrots with butter</li> <li>• 4 ounces of cranberry juice</li> </ul>

Evening snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 piece of pound cake topped with strawberries and whipped cream</li> <li>• 4 ounces of Double Milk (recipe above)</li> </ul>
---------------	--

## Vegetarian diet sample menus

Meal	Vegetarian diet sample menu
Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>\frac{3}{4}</math> cup of cooked oatmeal made with milk, raisins, walnuts, brown sugar, and butter</li> <li>• 4 ounces of hot chocolate made with milk</li> </ul>
Mid-morning snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 slice of whole grain toast with mashed avocado</li> <li>• 4 ounces of orange juice</li> </ul>
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Peanut butter and jelly sandwich on whole-grain bread</li> <li>• 4 ounces of Double Milk (recipe above)</li> </ul>
Afternoon snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 cup of popcorn</li> <li>• 4 ounces of apple juice</li> </ul>
Dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 (2-inch) slice of broccoli and cheese quiche</li> <li>• 1 small salad with feta cheese, olives, olive oil, and vinegar</li> <li>• 4 ounces of sparkling water with a splash of juice</li> </ul>
Evening snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 tablespoons of hummus on <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> of a toasted pita</li> <li>• 4 ounces of peach nectar</li> </ul>

Meal	Vegetarian diet sample menu
Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 fried egg</li> <li>• 1 slice of whole-grain bread with butter and raspberry jam</li> <li>• 4 ounces of apricot nectar</li> </ul>
Mid-morning snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 dried apricots</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{4}</math> cup of almonds</li> <li>• 4 ounces of vanilla yogurt smoothie</li> </ul>
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> of a falafel sandwich with extra tahini</li> <li>• 4 ounces of lemonade</li> </ul>
Afternoon snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 graham crackers with 2 tablespoons of peanut butter</li> <li>• 4 ounces of Double Milk (recipe above)</li> </ul>
Dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 cup of pasta with pesto sauce</li> <li>• <math>\frac{1}{2}</math> cup of chilled asparagus tips with blue cheese dressing</li> <li>• 4 ounces of grape juice</li> </ul>

Evening snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 baked apple with cinnamon sugar, butter, and walnuts</li> <li>• 4 ounces of vanilla soy milk</li> </ul>
---------------	--

## Vegan diet sample menus

Meal	Vegan diet sample menu
Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ cup of muesli with slices of fresh peach</li> <li>• 4 ounces of soy, rice, or almond milk</li> </ul>
Mid-morning snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 small apple</li> <li>• ½ cup of roasted pistachios</li> <li>• 4oz of cranberry juice</li> </ul>
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ cup of linguini with broccoli garlic and oil</li> <li>• 1 veggie meatball</li> <li>• 4 ounces of rice milk</li> </ul>
Afternoon snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 4 ounces of guacamole with tortilla chips</li> <li>• 4 ounces of apricot nectar</li> </ul>
Dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ½ cup of tofu and white bean casserole</li> <li>• ½ cup of brown rice</li> <li>• ½ cup of sautéed spinach with roasted pine nuts</li> <li>• 4 ounces of peach nectar</li> </ul>
Evening snack	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 1 (2-inch) slice of silken tofu “cheese” cake</li> <li>• 4 ounces of chocolate soy milk</li> </ul>

### Additional menu items:

**Fruits:** apple, banana, dragon fruit, guava, kiwi, lychee, mango, melon, orange, papaya, passion fruit, peach, pineapple, plantain, pomegranate, tangerine, tamarind

**Vegetables:** bean sprouts, beets, bitter melon, bok choy, broccoli, cabbage, callaloo, carrots, cassava, collard greens, daikon, jicama, mushrooms, okra, radishes, peppers (chiles), snow peas, squashes, sweet potatoes, water chestnuts, yucca, zucchini

**Grains:** amaranth, barley, breads (including naan, pita, roti, tortilla), buckwheat, cereals, couscous, crackers, oatmeal, maize, millet, noodles, pasta, quinoa, rice

**Animal proteins:** beef, fish, goat, lamb, pork, poultry, shellfish

**Plant Proteins:** beans, lentils, nuts, nut butters, seeds, tempeh, tofu

**Dairy products:** Cheese (including cotija, Oaxaca, paneer, queso fresco), kefir, milk (including lactose-free milk), yogurt. Choose Lactose free options if you are lactose intolerant.

## Resources

### Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics (AND)

[www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)

AND is a professional organization for registered dietitians. The website has information about the latest nutrition guidelines and research and can help you find a dietitian in your area. The academy also publishes *The Complete Food & Nutrition Guide*, which has over 600 pages of food, nutrition, and health information.

### American Institute for Cancer Research

[www.aicr.org](http://www.aicr.org)

800-843-8114

Has information on diet and cancer prevention research and education as well as recipes.

### Cook For Your Life

[www.cookforyourlife.org](http://www.cookforyourlife.org)

Many recipe ideas for patients with cancer. Recipes can be filtered by diet type or treatment side effect.

### FDA Center for Food Safety and Applied Nutrition

[www.fda.gov/AboutFDA/CentersOffices/OfficeofFoods/CFSAN/default.htm](http://www.fda.gov/AboutFDA/CentersOffices/OfficeofFoods/CFSAN/default.htm)

Has helpful information on food safety.

### MSK Integrative Medicine and Wellness Service

[www.msk.org/integrativemedicine](http://www.msk.org/integrativemedicine)

Our Integrative Medicine and Wellness Service offers many services to complement (go along with) traditional medical care, including music therapy, mind/body therapies, dance and movement therapy, yoga, and touch therapy. To schedule an appointment for these services, call 646-449-1010.

The Integrative Medicine and Wellness Service also provides counseling on nutrition and dietary supplements. You can find more information about herbal and other dietary supplements at [www.msk.org/herbs](http://www.msk.org/herbs).

You can also schedule a consultation with a healthcare provider in the Integrative

Medicine and Wellness Service. They will work with you to come up with a plan for creating a healthy lifestyle and managing side effects. To make an appointment, call 646-608-8550.

#### **MSK Nutrition Services website**

[www.msk.org/nutrition](http://www.msk.org/nutrition)

Use our diet plans and recipes to help with healthy eating habits during and after cancer treatment

#### **National Institutes of Health Office of Dietary Supplements**

<http://ods.od.nih.gov>

301-435-2920

Has up-to-date information on dietary supplements.

## **Contact information for nutrition services at MSK**

Any MSK patient is welcome to make an appointment with one of our clinical dietitian nutritionists for medical nutrition therapy. Our clinical dietitian nutritionists are available for appointments at multiple outpatient locations within Manhattan and the following regional site locations:

- **Memorial Sloan Kettering Basking Ridge**  
136 Mountain View Blvd.  
Basking Ridge, NJ 07920
- **Memorial Sloan Kettering Bergen**  
225 Summit Ave.  
Montvale, NJ 07645
- **Memorial Sloan Kettering Commack Nonna's Garden Foundation Center**  
650 Commack Rd.  
Commack, NY 11725
- **Memorial Sloan Kettering Monmouth**  
480 Red Hill Rd.  
Middletown, NJ 07748
- **Memorial Sloan Kettering Nassau**  
1101 Hempstead Tpk.  
Uniondale, NY 11553
- **Memorial Sloan Kettering Westchester**  
500 Westchester Ave.

West Harrison, NY 10604

To schedule an appointment with a clinical dietitian nutritionist at any of our locations, contact our nutrition scheduling office at 212-639-7312.

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

---

Eating Well During Your Cancer Treatment - Last updated on October 17, 2025

All rights owned and reserved by Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center

**Last Updated**

October 17, 2025

Learn about our [Health Information Policy](#).

# Tell us what you think

# Tell us what you think

Your feedback will help us improve the educational information we provide. Your care team cannot see anything you write on this feedback form. Please do not use it to ask about your care. If you have questions about your care, contact your healthcare provider.

While we read all feedback, we cannot answer any questions. Please do not write your name or any personal information on this feedback form.

Was this information easy to understand?

Yes

Somewhat

No

What could we have explained better?

Please do not write your name or any personal information.

Submit