



NUTRITION TIPS FOR PANCREATIC CANCER

Eating is often a challenge for people with pancreatic cancer because they are living with ongoing symptoms either from their cancer, surgery or other treatment, that may impact their ability to digest foods normally and maintain good nutrition. Sometimes having multiple symptoms may make it confusing to follow a healthy meal plan. The following tips are designed to provide ways to help manage these issues through simple dietary changes. Before changing your diet, talk with your healthcare team. Your doctor may refer you to a registered dietitian who specializes in oncology nutrition (RD, CSO) to design a meal plan for your nutritional needs. You can search for an oncology dietitian in your area at www.oncologynutrition.org. In addition, other resources have a wealth of useful information for patients and their families, including:

- The Pancreatic Cancer Action Network (PanCAN) (www.pancan.org)
- Meals to Heal (www.meals-to-heal.com)
- National Cancer Institute (www.cancer.gov)
- American Cancer Society (www.cancer.org)

These tips are for informational purposes only. They are not intended to be a substitute for professional medical advice, diagnosis or treatment. Talk to your healthcare team for nutritional advice or specific questions you have about managing your condition or that of a loved one.

- 1. Consume small, frequent meals** - Try to consume a small portion of food every 1-3 hours, as you are able. This is especially important if you have had surgery for your pancreatic cancer, because your body is learning how to digest food again; it is helpful to eat more frequently and in smaller quantities to allow your body to more easily adapt to digesting after surgery.
- 2. Separate food and beverages** - It is suggested to wait 30-60 minutes after eating solid foods to have a beverage, both to prevent nausea and avoid filling up on lower calorie beverages that lack nutritional value.
- 3. Be sure to eat slowly** - Eating too quickly can contribute to digestive discomfort. Small, frequent meals are important to promote better digestion and allow your body to handle small amounts of food at a time.
- 4. Keep a food diary** - Keeping a food diary is very helpful for anyone who is experiencing digestive symptoms, especially people who have undergone pancreatic surgery. A food diary may help you to assess your tolerance of a new food or meal and identify those that may be triggering pain, discomfort, or indigestion. Even though the food suggestions below are a guide, everyone's body may have different sensitivities to various foods. It is important to slowly introduce one new food at a time and assess your own individual tolerance. Be sure to communicate with your healthcare team if you experience anything unusual.
- 5. Talk to your doctor about getting help for nutritional needs** - It may help to seek the advice of a registered dietitian to help ensure that you are able to meet your nutritional requirements during and after cancer treatment.

Recipe Substitutions:

Before making any changes in your diet, it is important to talk to your healthcare team.

- If you are not able to tolerate **fat** in your diet due to fat malabsorption (inadequate absorption of fat from the intestinal tract), choose non-fat or low-fat dairy products, decrease the amount of oil used, and avoid adding nuts. 2 egg whites may be substituted for 1 egg.
- If you are not able to tolerate **lactose** in your diet due to gas, bloating or diarrhea associated with dairy consumption, substitute lactose-free milk or soy, rice or almond milk.
- If you have **diabetes or elevated blood sugar**, you may reduce the amount of sugar in the recipe or ask your healthcare team for a recommended sugar substitute.
- If you are **intolerant to gluten**, gluten-free flour can easily be substituted in any recipe.

Nutritional Tips for Common Cancer-Related Symptoms

SYMPTOM	NOT RECOMMENDED	RECOMMENDED
<p>Diarrhea Sensitivity to dietary fiber & roughage Post-operative dietary fiber restriction</p>	<p>Uncooked, raw fruits and vegetables</p> <p>Certain foods are tough to digest whether cooked or not—including foods that have shells, skins, or seeds, like popcorn and nuts</p> <p><i>*These foods are especially important to avoid after surgery while your digestive system is healing, or if you are experiencing symptoms of diarrhea or bowel obstruction</i></p>	<p>Foods with 2 grams or less of fiber per serving, such as white breads, rice, pastas and cold cereals made with rice or corn</p> <p>Well-cooked vegetables that are tender enough to cut with a fork</p> <p>Canned fruits in their own juices (not in syrup), applesauce and peeled fruit without pulp</p>
<p>Intestinal gas and bloating</p>	<p>Artichokes, asparagus, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, Brussels sprouts, green pepper, peas, lentils, beans, onions, apple, apricot, banana, melon, and prunes</p> <p>If you are sensitive to lactose, choose lactose-free dairy products</p> <p>Sugar substitutes and alcohols like xylitol can also contribute to gas</p> <p>Also avoid drinking through a straw, chewing gum and drinking carbonated beverages as these can also contribute to gas</p>	<p>Better tolerated vegetables are typically cooked potato (white or sweet) without the skin; carrots; squashes such as butternut, acorn, or spaghetti; zucchini or yellow squash</p> <p>Canned or cooked fruits, peaches, grapes, kiwi, berries as tolerated</p>
<p>Dumping syndrome (undigested food moves too quickly from stomach to intestines; usually happens after surgery) Hyperglycemia (high blood sugar)</p>	<p>Foods high in sugar and sugar alcohols</p> <p>Avoid added sugars such as table sugar, honey, molasses, syrups, sorbitol and/or xylitol</p> <p><i>*These can affect the movement of food through your digestive system and may cause discomfort</i></p>	<p>Eat slowly and consume small, frequent meals</p>
<p>Indigestion Fat Intolerance and malabsorption (inadequate absorption of fat from the intestinal tract)</p>	<p>Gravies and sauces, large amounts of cheese, oils and deep fried foods.</p> <p>Full-fat dairy products, poultry skin, and red meats</p>	<p>Reduced-fat or non-fat dairy products Lean meat and poultry, fish, eggs, tofu Baked, broiled or grilled foods</p>
<p>Gastric reflux (heartburn)</p>	<p>Acidic foods like tomato, citrus fruits, vinegar Caffeinated and alcoholic beverages Chocolate and mint, spicy foods High-fat foods with a lot of grease and oil</p>	<p>Blander foods cooked without a lot of oil or fat Non-acidic fruits & vegetables</p>

The **Cooking. Comfort. Care. Nourishment for the Pancreatic Cancer Fight** program was created by Celgene Corporation and in collaboration with the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network, Meals to Heal and Chef Michael Ferraro. These nutritional tips were developed by registered dietitians who are board-certified specialists in oncology nutrition affiliated with the Pancreatic Cancer Action Network and at Meals to Heal.