

Good nutrition helps you tolerate cancer treatment better and with fewer side effects. You need more calories and protein during cancer treatment. Following a diet high in calories and protein will help you stay healthy and strong.

These side effects of head and neck cancer treatments can change the way you eat:

- Changes in taste and smell
- Difficult chewing or swallowing
- Loss of appetite
- Sore or dry mouth and throat
- Thick saliva

Do the swallowing exercises your speech therapist gives you, even if it is not comfortable. They keep your swallowing muscles strong. If you have questions or concerns, call your doctor or speech therapist.

Tips for Eating Well

Weigh yourself one to two times per week at home or at your doctor appointments.

- Losing weight during treatment means you are not getting enough calories and protein.
- Set a goal to prevent weight loss. If you want to lose weight, wait until your treatment is over.

Eat five to six times a day.

- Have small meals every 2-3 hours.
- Be consistent. Eat at the same times every day, even if you don't feel hungry.
- Keep a list of what you eat and drink each day. This can help you make sure you eat enough.

You may need to change the foods you eat as your treatment goes on.

- You may be eating normally when your treatment begins. You may need to change to a soft diet later because of side effects. This is normal.
- Some people need a liquid diet at the end of treatment because it gets hard to swallow. Your dietitian will tell you what types of liquids you need to stay healthy.
- A few weeks after treatment ends, it will be easier to eat normal foods again.

Your current weight _____

Your daily calorie needs _____

Your daily protein needs _____

Your daily fluid needs _____

If you cannot eat solid foods:

Brand of liquid nutrition _____

Amount _____

Your **extra** daily fluid needs _____

Choose soft, moist foods high in calories and protein. See the Table 1 on page 2 for suggestions.

Add more calories and protein to the foods you eat.

- Use full-fat yogurt, cheese, and milk. Avoid non-fat or skim dairy products.
- Add powdered or evaporated milk to casseroles, soups, hot cereal, potatoes, gravies, and smoothies.
 - Mix equal amounts of dried milk powder and hot cereal together. Add liquid and cook as directed.
 - Add 1/3 cup dried milk powder to each 2 cups of mashed potatoes.
 - Add 4 tablespoons dried milk powder to each cup of sauce, gravy, soup, or custard.
- Add grated cheese and plain Greek yogurt to soups.
- Top foods with avocado, olive and canola oil, or peanut butter.
- Have canned fruit with cottage cheese.
- Top a baked potato with cheese, sour cream, chili, or bean soup.

Drink liquids without caffeine to stay hydrated and to keep your mouth moist.

Replace most calorie-free beverages such as water, coffee, and tea with drinks that have calories:

- Milk or chocolate milk
- Fruit juices
- Sports drinks
- Nutrition supplements (See Table 2 on page 3.)

continued on page 2

Table 1: Suggestions for High-Calorie, High-Protein Soft Foods

| Food Group | Soft Foods | |
|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| Breads, cereals, and starches | Hot cereal Pancakes or waffles Potatoes | Noodles Rice |
| Soups | Bean Chicken noodle Creamy soups Potato | Split pea Tomato Lentil |
| Meats and meat substitutes | Chicken pot pie Chicken salad Eggs Fish, well-moistened Hummus Lasagna | Meatloaf Peanut butter Ravioli Refried beans Tofu Tuna salad |
| Casseroles | Bread stuffing Beef stroganoff | Macaroni and cheese Tuna rice casserole |
| Dairy | Cheese, full-fat Cottage cheese, full-fat Yogurt, full-fat | |
| Fruit | Applesauce Bananas Canned fruits | |
| Vegetables | All kinds, cooked until soft Recommend adding butter, cheese, or oil | |
| Desserts | Bread pudding Cakes, soft and moist Cheesecake Custard Eggnog Ice cream, gelato, or sherbet | Mousse Pies with smooth filling such as pumpkin, chocolate, or lemon Pudding Soufflé |
| Fats and Toppings | Avocado Butter Cream cheese Creamer Gravy Half and half Honey | Jelly or jam Mayonnaise Olive or vegetable oil Peanut butter Sour cream Whipped cream |

Table 2: High-Calorie, High-Protein Nutrition Supplements

| Product | Calories (per 8 oz.) | Protein (per 8 oz.) | Where Available |
|--|-----------------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------|
| Benecalorie® | 330 (per 1.5 oz.) | 7 g (per 1.5 oz.) | Internet |
| Boost® | 240 | 10 g | Grocery stores, Internet |
| Boost® Breeze | 250 | 9 g | Grocery stores, Internet |
| Boost® Compact | 240 (per 4 oz.) | 10 g (per 4 oz.) | Grocery stores, internet |
| Boost Glucose Control®* | 190 | 16 g | Grocery stores, Internet |
| Boost Plus® | 360 | 14 g | Grocery stores, Internet |
| Boost® VHC (Very High Calorie) | 530 | 22 g | Internet |
| Carnation Instant Breakfast® mixed with whole milk | 280 | 15 g | Grocery stores |
| Ensure® | 270 | 9 g | Grocery stores, Internet |
| Ensure® Clear | 180 | 8 g | Grocery stores, Internet |
| Ensure Compact® | 220 (per 4 oz) | 9 g (per 4 oz.) | Grocery stores, Internet |
| Ensure Enlive® | 350 | 20 g | Grocery stores, internet |
| Ensure Plus® | 350 | 13 g | Grocery stores, Internet |
| Glucerna®* | 200 | 10 g | Grocery stores, Internet |
| Orgain Vegan® | 220 | 16 g | Grocery stores, internet |
| Premier Protein® | 160 | 30 g | Grocery stores, internet |
| Scandishake® | 580 | 12 g | Internet |

*For people with diabetes

Notes

For more information about good nutrition during cancer treatment, call the dietitians at the Linda B. and Robert B. Wiggins Wellness and Integrative Health Center:

801-587-4585