

GOOD NUTRITION ON THE CHEMOTHERAPY DAY UNIT



Peter Mac
Peter MacCallum Cancer Centre
Victoria Australia

Good nutrition is important for all patients who come to Peter Mac. Preventing malnutrition (or poor nutrition) will help you tolerate your cancer treatment better and help you recover as quickly as possible.

Your malnutrition risk

When you come to the Chemotherapy Day Unit, a nurse will weigh you and ask you questions about your appetite and current food intake. This is called the Malnutrition Screening Tool (or MST). The results of the MST help the nutrition team monitor your malnutrition risk.

Who is the nutrition team?

The nutrition team consists of nutrition assistants and dietitians.

Nutrition assistants work with dietitians to maintain high standards of nutritional care during your time at Peter Mac. The nutrition assistants are not trained to give dietary advice. They ensure you receive appropriate advice from a dietitian and help encourage your eating.

Dietitians assess and treat anyone who has been identified as being at risk of malnutrition. The dietitian will determine an individualised treatment plan for you. This may involve organising particular foods or nutritional supplements, and providing individualised dietary advice to ensure you are receiving the most appropriate nutrition in hospital and at home.

Food availability on the Chemotherapy Day Unit

During your time on the Chemotherapy Day Unit, there are a number of different food options available.

Morning tea and **afternoon tea** is available to everyone. The following choices are available either from the trolley or in the kitchen:

- Tea and coffee
- Soft drinks, including soda water, lemonade, solo and dry ginger ale
- Savoury and sweet biscuits, cakes, muffins, and cheese
- High protein supplements, including Resource Fruit Beverage, Ensure Plus and Sustagen

Lunch will be offered to everyone who is receiving treatment during the lunch period. Lunch consists of a soup and sandwich.

If you have been identified by the nutrition assistant as having high nutritional risk treatment, you will be offered a high energy and protein hot lunch from the hospital menu. When having your meal order taken, please let the nutrition assistant know if you have any special dietary requirements/allergies such as vegetarian, gluten free or puréed meals.

If you have a clinical need for a hot meal, such as coeliac disease or a food allergy and are not seeing the nutrition assistant, please speak to your nurse who can organise an appropriate meal for you.

You are encouraged and welcome to bring in food from home to ensure you are eating well throughout the day. Please keep in mind the length of your treatment to ensure you don't miss any meals.



Important information

If you have concerns about your **nutrition** or **weight**, please talk to your doctor/nurse who may refer you to our dietitians. You may also contact the Peter Mac Nutrition Department on **(03) 8559 5220**.

If you have problems **swallowing**, please talk to your doctor who may refer you to a speech pathologist.

This information sheet may not be suitable for you if you have other medical conditions. If you are not sure, please ask your doctor/dietitian.

In the event of an **emergency**, please dial **000** for an ambulance or go to your nearest hospital emergency department.