



Good nutrition is important for patients living with cancer.

Sometimes the side effects of treatment or the effects of the cancer itself can make it difficult to eat all that your body needs. Choosing nourishing foods that are high in protein and energy can help to meet your nutrition needs during this time.

How to make your diet more nourishing

Protein is the building block of muscles. It is needed for healing and repair of your body, especially after surgery and during cancer treatment. Include the following foods, where possible, can help increase protein in your diet:

- meat/chicken/fish
- eggs
- full cream dairy (milk, cheese, yoghurt, custard, ice cream)
- nuts and nut butter (e.g. peanut, almond)
- lentils and legumes (e.g. baked beans, chickpeas)
- tofu and tempeh
- fortified milk (recipe top right of page).

Energy is the fuel your body needs to function and undertake daily activities. Adding the following to your food, wherever possible, can help increase the energy content of your diet:

- butter, margarine and oils
- cream and creamy sauces
- avocado
- coconut milk/cream
- gravy (made with meat juices)
- jam and honey
- sugar.

Fortified milk recipe

- 2/3 cup (75g) skim milk powder
- 2 cups (500ml) milk.

Sprinkle powder onto milk and mix until dissolved.

Fortified milk is best if made a couple of hours before using. Store in the refrigerator and use in place of regular milk.

Some handy tips to try

- Try to have 6 smaller meals/snacks across the day.
- If your appetite is better in the morning, plan bigger meals then and smaller snacks for later in the day.
- Try not to skip/miss meals, as not eating can make you feel worse.
- Plan ahead and take snacks with you to appointments.
- Eat by the clock (e.g. every 1-2hours) if you don't feel hungry.
- If preparing meals becomes difficult, keep a supply of ready to eat foods handy (e.g. single serve items in the dairy, frozen foods, soup and canned food sections of the supermarket).

- If you feel full quickly, avoid drinking large amounts of liquid 1 hour before and 30 minutes after meals.
- Be willing to try new foods rather than continuing with difficult/unpleasant tastes.
- Remember to always make sure your mouth feels fresh and clean before eating.

Making the most of every mouthful

The following table has some suggestions of how to increase the nourishment of your food

Food group	Food/snack	Add extra nourishment by
Meat and meat alternatives	Meat, chicken or fish (cooked)	Frying with butter/margarine/oil
	Meat, chicken or fish (cold)	Add oil, mayonnaise or salad dressing
	Eggs (poached, scrambled, fried, omelette)	Add butter/margarine, avocado, grated cheese or cream
	Beans and pulses: baked beans, lentils, red kidney beans, split peas	Add to casseroles, soups and mince
	Nuts, seeds, 'nut meat', nut butters/spreads	Add to salads
	Tofu, dumplings, wontons	Add to casseroles
Dairy foods	Milk, soy milk, milkshakes and smoothies	Use fortified milk
	Cheese and biscuits/crackers	Add nuts, seeds, cream, sugar/honey, ice cream, yoghurt, Sustagen™/Ensure™/Advital™
	Dips and crackers/chips	Add butter/margarine
	Yoghurt, soy yoghurt, custard,	Choose hummus or cream cheese based dips
Bread and cereals	Breakfast cereals	Use fortified milk
	Bread, toast or muffins	Add nuts, seeds, cream, sugar/honey, yoghurt, fruit, Sustagen™/Ensure™/Advital™
	Pasta and rice	Add butter/margarine, avocado, honey, nut butter, nutella or jam
Fruit and vegetables	Vegetables	Add butter/margarine/oil, grated cheese or creamy sauces (e.g. cheese sauce)
	Salad	Add oil, mayonnaise or salad dressing
	Fruit (fresh, stewed, tinned or packet)	Add sugar/honey, cream, fortified milk, yoghurt, custard or ice cream

Remember: it is important to eat a variety of foods each day. A selection of foods from each food group will ensure variety and the nutritional balance necessary for good health.

Sample menu ideas	
Breakfast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Breakfast cereal with fortified milk and added sugar/honey • Poached/boiled/fried/scrambled eggs with cheese/milk/fortified milk • Toast with butter/margarine and cheese/cream cheese/peanut butter/avocado
Morning Tea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milk drink (e.g. Sustagen™/Ensure™/iced coffee/fruit smoothie/Up and Go™) • Fruit with yoghurt/custard
Lunch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meal: Cooked soft meat/fish with gravy/sauce and softly cooked vegetables mashed with milk/margarine/cream/cheese • Dessert: Creamed rice or yoghurt
Afternoon Tea	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Dairy dessert (yoghurt/Fruche™/rice pudding) • Biscuits with cheese/dip
Dinner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Meal: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Spaghetti bolognese with added grated cheese and bread with butter/margarine – Meat/chicken/fish with gravy/white sauce and extra margarine/butter and cheese in mashed potato • Dessert: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Custard/ice cream/chocolate mousse/ crème caramel
Supper	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sweet biscuits and milk Milo™ (made with fortified milk)

Supplements

Your dietitian may recommend you consume a nutritional supplement if you have lost weight or your intake remains poor. Commonly recommended supplements include:

- Sustagen™
- Ensure™
- Resource fruit Beverage™
- Advital™.

Your Dietitian can provide more information in regards to nutrition supplement drinks.

Additional recommendations discussed with your dietitian:



How to contact us

You can contact the Nutrition department on **(03) 8559 5220 from Monday to Friday between 8:30am to 4:30pm.**