



Tips For Those Experiencing Diarrhea

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Nutrition is very important during cancer treatment. Consuming enough calories and protein in your diet will help your body maintain strength and energy levels, fight infections, recover faster, and improve your tolerance to treatment.

Unfortunately, cancer treatment can cause side effects that may affect your ability to do so. For example, a low appetite, fatigue, taste changes, and pain can make preparing meals or finding foods you enjoy eating difficult, and diarrhea can result in the loss of water and nutrients in your body, leading to dehydration and malnutrition.

Here are some tips to help manage diarrhea and provide your body with the nutrition it needs during treatment.

Drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration

- At least 8 cups of fluid per day
- Add an additional 1 cup of fluid for each loose bowel movement
- Hydrating beverages:
 - Water, broth, soups, fruit juice without pulp
 - Gatorade, Pedialyte, Rehydralyte, Oral Rehydration Solution (ORS)



Decrease intestinal movement by avoiding

- High-fiber foods
 - Raw fruits and vegetables
 - *besides bananas, melons, and potatoes without skins*
 - Nuts and seeds
 - Beans and legumes
 - Whole grains
 - Whole wheat bread
 - Whole wheat pasta
 - Brown rice
 - Quinoa
 - Farro
 - Bran cereals



Decrease intestinal movement by avoiding

- High-fat foods
 - Greasy or fried foods
 - Full-fat dairy products
 - Processed meats: sausage, bacon, hotdogs, ham, bologna, salami
 - Nuts and nut butters
 - Poultry with skin
 - Mayonnaise
 - Butter or margarine
 - Oils
- Spicy foods
- Sugary foods/beverages
 - Honey, maple syrup
 - High fructose corn syrup
 - Sweets & desserts
 - Sodas
 - Lemonade
 - Canned fruit in syrup
- Food and beverages containing sugar alcohols (sorbitol, xylitol, or mannitol)
 - e.g. sugar-free candies and gums
- Caffeine
- Alcohol



Eat starchy, low-fiber foods

- White bread
- White rice
- Pasta
- Potatoes without skin
- Pretzels
- Crackers
- Cream of wheat



Thicken stool by eating foods with soluble fiber

- Bananas, applesauce
- Banana flakes, apple powder
- Canned peaches



Eat small, frequent meals

- Consuming small meals puts less stress on your digestive system

Limit dairy consumption

- ▶ Limit milk or milk products to no more than 2 cups per day
- ▶ Choose dairy alternatives:
 - Soy milk and yogurt
 - Almond milk
 - Coconut milk and yogurt
 - Non-dairy cream
 - Lactose-free milk



Communicate with your healthcare team

- ▶ Keep open communication with your healthcare team about your symptoms
- ▶ Check with your doctor or nurse before taking medications for diarrhea
- ▶ Take all medications as you are prescribed
- ▶ Call your health care team if:
 - Diarrhea persists or worsens
 - You feel dizzy or lightheaded
 - You have dark yellow urine or are not urinating
 - You have a fever

How to Reintroduce Foods

Introduce solid food one at a time and monitor symptoms. If stool production increases after eating a certain food, stop eating it until you recover.

- 1 Start with bland foods like bananas, white rice, applesauce, toast, crackers, and pretzels
- 2 Then slowly introduce low-fat meats like baked chicken or turkey and eggs
- 3 If tolerated well, then slowly reintroduce fruits and vegetables, and lastly, fats



Disclaimer: Please note that the information provided herein is intended to serve as a general guideline and may not meet the unique nutritional needs of individual patients. The distribution of these materials is at the discretion of the physician. The creator does not hold responsibility for their application or outcomes on individual health conditions. All patients are advised to consult with their physician for personalized advice tailored to their unique needs and circumstances.