

*"Let food be your medicine."
- Hippocrates*



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Your food choices influence how well you tolerate treatment, help you heal and recover more quickly after treatment, and optimize your future health.

Each patient at West Cancer Center has the added advantage of nutrition counseling. West Cancer Center has a certified Oncology Nutrition Dietitian that provides individualized assistance on food-related issues during and after your cancer treatment. There is no charge for these services.

Our Nutrition Services include personalized nutrition consults on any food or nutrition related topic including healthy eating during treatment, managing side effects, and weight management among others. Making smart food choices can be confusing in the best of times. Let us help you sort through the facts and fiction.

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WHAT TO EAT

Learn how to lower your cancer risk with diet, weight management, and physical activity.



The University of Tennessee
WEST
Cancer Center
Methodist Healthcare Family

Studies show a plant-based diet, daily exercise, and a healthy weight can reduce the risk of cancer and its recurrence. The good news is that the way you live your life matters. Here are some tips on how to lower your cancer risk.

Does my weight matter?

Yes! Being a healthy weight reduces your risk of some cancers. If you are overweight, aim to get to and maintain a healthy weight. Avoid gaining unnecessary weight during or after your treatment. Eat smaller portions of a plant based diet. Increase your daily physical activity. These are the first steps towards a healthier weight.

What if I'm gaining weight?

Weight gain has many causes, including increased food intake, decreased physical activity, and muscle loss. All are common during and after treatment. Choosing a plant-based diet, watching your portions, and exercising can help.

What should I eat?

Choose a plant-based diet. This means at least 2/3 of the food on your plate should come from a plant. Vegetables, fruit, whole grains, legumes, nuts, seeds, and plant oils like canola and olive, are all plant foods.

What are the best fruits and vegetables?

Dark colored produce generally has more nutrition including antioxidants, but all produce has something healthy to offer your body. Antioxidants are plant compounds found in produce that help fight cancer and other disease. Eat a variety of colorful vegetables and fruits each day. Eating 5 - 9 servings is recommended. A serving equates to 1/2 cup cooked, 1 cup cut-up raw, or one small piece.

Should I become a vegetarian?

No. Eating mostly plant foods leaves room for some animal foods - up to 1/3 of the food on your plate. Healthful animal foods include fish, poultry, low fat and fat free dairy foods, and eggs.

Do I need extra protein?

You get protein from all the animal foods listed above and from all vegetables, grains, and nuts. Beans and peas (pinto, black, lima, black eyes peas, garbanzos, kidney, navy, white, red, etc.) and soy foods are good sources of protein. Have a high protein food with each meal.

Can I have red meat?

Yes, in limited amounts. Eat no more than 18 ounces of lean, red meat per week. This includes beef, pork, lamb, veal, and goat. Avoid processed meats like hot-dogs, sausages, ham, and bacon.



What about fats?

In general, 40 - 60 grams of fat daily is enough. Limit animal fats found in poultry skin, high fat cuts of beef and pork, and regular cheese and milk. Choose plant-based fats such as olive and canola oils, nuts, seeds, avocados, and olives. Salad dressing and mayonnaise are often made with good fats.

Watch your portions! A serving is 1 teaspoon of oil, 1 tablespoon of seeds, or 4-10 nuts.

What about soy?

Whole soy foods are a good source of protein. It's fine to eat 1 - 2 servings per day of whole soy foods like tofu, edamame, tempeh, or soy milk. Choose USA organic soy foods when possible.

What about organic food?

Organic foods can be part of a healthful diet. The main reason to choose organic is to reduce the amount of pesticides or herbicides in your diet. For more information on pesticides in food, please visit www.ewg.org.

Liquids: What should I drink?

Green tea, along with all teas, is high in antioxidants, which can be part of a healthful diet. Be aware of the caffeine content if this is a concern. Decaffeinated green tea is also good for you. Avoid tea with added sugar.

Coffee is a good source of antioxidants, but don't over do it. Too much caffeine stimulates the release of stress hormones. About 2 cups daily is enough for most people.

Alcohol increases the risk of some cancers. If you drink, limit to one serving daily for women and two servings daily for men.

Which supplements do I need?

Supplements do not take the place of a healthy diet. Most people do not need a multivitamin. If you don't eat dairy every day, consider a calcium plus Vitamin D supplement. Have your vitamin D level checked to see if you need a supplement.

Exercise:

Exercise at least 30 minutes, six days a week to decrease your risk of cancer. You may need to exercise for one hour or more each day for weight loss. You can exercise 10 minutes, three times a day to get the results of one (30 minute) session.

Brisk walking, swimming, or any moderate intensity exercise is good. Strength training is needed to maintain muscle mass. This helps with weight maintenance and bone health too. Yoga increases strength and flexibility, is calming, and helps relieve menopausal symptoms in women after treatment