



Nutrition Guidelines for Chemotherapy

It is recommended that you eat lightly on your chemotherapy day. Eating small portions slowly and every few hours seem to work best. Avoid skipping meals on these days and eating fatty, greasy or spicy foods.

What do I eat before going to chemotherapy?

Light, bland foods seem to work best. Some examples of choices are:

- Plain or Fruited yogurt
- Fresh fruit and cottage cheese
- Poached egg and toast
- Toasted bagel with a small amount of peanut butter
- Cereal and milk (try Lactaid® milk, or Soy milk, if lactose intolerant)
- Chicken rice soup with saltine crackers

During chemotherapy take a small, bland snack with you. You can try the above foods as well as snack on low acid juices (apple, grape, and fruit nectars), liquid yogurts, fruits such as bananas, and crackers. Bring a water bottle and fill it with your favorite beverage (avoid acidic foods which may be irritating to your digestive tract). Juices and supplements as Ensure or Boost are usually available where you are receiving chemotherapy; however ask in advance if these and any other foods are available. If you don't feel like eating during the infusion that is ok but remember that you may feel better with eating small amounts of bland food and liquids. Drink small amounts every ½ hour as tolerated.

What do I eat after chemotherapy and for the next few days?

- **Eat small meals and snacks** throughout the day (aim for 5-6 smaller meals rather than 3 large meals).
- **Eat lower fat, blander foods!**
- **Try colder or cool foods** – these give off less odor and aroma and are especially important if you feel nauseous. Hot foods can have a more pronounced odor, therefore causing an aversion to certain foods.
- **Drink fluids frequently** – this will prevent dehydration and remove some of the byproducts of the chemotherapy.
Water is the best but there are other sources of fluids such as: apple and grape juice, fruit nectars, low-salt broth, clear soups, Gatorade, Popsicles and sherbet, gelatin, herbal teas such as ginger and mint, weak black teas.
- **Take your anti-nausea medication as prescribed by your medical team**

Adapted from: The American Cancer Society (www.cancer.org)

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