

Weight Gain Prevention

Weight gain during cancer treatment may occur for a number of reasons, including lack of exercise, hormonal and medical treatments, and eating more than you need as a way to soothe and comfort yourself at a stressful time. Please talk to your doctor, nurse, or dietitian for additional information about management of the symptoms that may lead to weight gain if you have questions about this issue.

Using Nutrition to Help Yourself

To prevent gaining excess weight during treatment, you will need to choose the right food and avoid things that contribute to weight gain.

Nutrition Tips to Prevent Excess Weight Gain

- If you have gained more than 5 pounds since beginning your treatment, ask for a referral to a dietitian for additional help.
- Eat breakfast.
- Eat more fiber.
- Drink more water. Try having 1 to 2 cups of water before each meal and snack. Water-rich foods, such as vegetables and fruit, can fill you up, too.
- Make specific goals, which are easier to track and meet. For example, make a commitment to eating three servings each of vegetables and fruit each day.
- Cover three-quarters of your plate with vegetables, fruit, whole grains, and legumes.
- Think positive. Focus on adding healthy food rather than what you can't have or shouldn't eat.
- Watch portion sizes and eat slowly. Pay attention to when you begin to feel full and stop when you get there.
- View healthy eating as a gift. A positive perspective makes a big difference.
- Get moving. This is not a nutrition tip, but it can be very helpful. Simply taking a walk each day can improve your energy and help prevent weight gain. Ask your doctor if it is OK to participate in mild to moderate exercise.

What to Eat and Drink

- Focus on high-nutrition, low-calorie food, such as vegetables, fruit, whole grains, and legumes.
- Eat low calorie density food. For example, a Big Mac or a Whopper is calorie dense at 600 to 900 calories. By contrast, food such as apples, carrots, oatmeal, and beans

have a fraction of the calories for the same volume of food. They have low calorie density and fill you up with fewer calories.



- Add frozen blueberries, strawberries, or blackberries to your cereal for extra fiber.
- Eat high-fiber, whole grain cereals that contain at least 6 grams of fiber per serving.
- Snack on baby carrots and humus.
- Enjoy bean or lentil soup for lunch.
- Try well-rinsed, canned beans to add protein and fiber to your meals.
- Use whole grain pasta instead of plain, white pasta.
- Rely on frozen vegetables and fruit for convenience.
- Choose whole grain, high-fiber bread that contains at least 3 grams of fiber per serving.
- Have lean protein, such as egg whites, chicken, or fish, with each meal. This will keep you full longer.

What to Avoid

- High-calorie, low-nutrition food, such as rich dessert items, high-fat baked goods, fast food, and any food that contains the ingredient high fructose corn syrup.
- High-fat food that contains the ingredient hydrogenated or partially hydrogenated oil.
- Processed food such as doughnuts, cookies, cake, pie, candy bars, instant meals, microwave meals, and snack food such as chips and crackers.
- Fried food, such as french fries and fried meat.
- High-calorie liquids, such as soda pop and fruit drinks that do not contain 100 percent fruit juice.
- Restaurant portions. To prevent overeating when eating out, place a portion of your meal into a "to go" container before beginning your meal, share an entrée with another person, or eat an appetizer as your main dish.