



Poor Appetite

Losing your appetite or your desire to eat is a common side effect of cancer and its treatment. Not eating can lead to weight loss, and weight loss can cause weakness and fatigue. Eating as well as you can during your cancer treatment and recovery is an important part of taking care of yourself. Proper nutrition can help you:

- ◆ Feel better.
- ◆ Keep up your strength and energy.
- ◆ Maintain your weight and your body's nutritional health.
- ◆ Tolerate the side effects of treatment better.
- ◆ Recover and heal as quickly as possible.

What to Ask Your Doctor

- ◆ Check with your doctor about medications to help relieve symptoms you may be experiencing, such as constipation, nausea, or pain.
- ◆ Talk to your doctor about taking a medication to increase your appetite.

The following tips may help when your appetite is poor:

- ◆ Eat five or six small meals and snacks each day, instead of three larger meals. Try to eat a little something every 2 to 3 hours.
- ◆ With your doctor's permission and guidance, be as physically active as possible. Whether walking around the neighborhood or doing chores around the house, physical activity can help stimulate your appetite. Start off slowly and gradually increase your physical activity as you feel stronger.
- ◆ Make eating more enjoyable by setting the table with pretty dishes and flowers. Play your favorite music or watch television while eating, or invite friends a family to eat with you.
- ◆ Keep nutritious snacks handy to eat when you are hungry. Try yogurt, cereal and milk, half a sandwich, peanut butter, hard-cooked eggs, hearty soups, cheese and crackers, granola bars, ice cream, and puddings.
- ◆ Nutritional supplements, such as liquid meal replacements, may be helpful. Your doctor, nurse, or dietitian may have samples and suggestions about which supplements would be best for you.
- ◆ Plan ahead. Ask family and friends to help you with cooking and shopping. Make sure your kitchen is well stocked with easy-to-eat and favorite foods.
- ◆ Include high-protein foods and high-calorie foods, in meals and snacks throughout the day.



Recipes Recipes Recipes

Quick Deviled Egg Salad

2 hard-cooked eggs
1 tbsp sweet pickle relish
Dash onion powder or salt
Dash lemon juice
Dash pepper
1 tsp spicy mustard
2 tbsp salad dressing or mayonnaise

Chop eggs with a fork or hand chopper. Add remaining ingredients. Mix together and serve on toast or crackers or with taco chips or bread sticks.

Makes one serving. Each serving contains 290 calories and 13 grams protein.

Baked Eggs

1½ tsp butter
⅓ cup shredded cheddar cheese
2 eggs
1 tbsp half-and-half
Salt and pepper to taste
Chopped fresh chives or salsa (optional)

Preheat oven to 350°F. Coat a shallow gratin dish or ovenproof cup with the butter. Mound the cheese in the dish and make a well in the center.

Break two eggs into the well. Pour half-and-half over the eggs and sprinkle with salt and pepper. Put the dish or cup into a pan of hot water. Bake until cheese has melted and eggs are done (about 20 to 25 minutes). Cover loosely with foil for last 5 minutes of cooking. Garnish with chives or salsa, if desired.

Makes one serving. Each serving contains 370 calories and 22 grams protein.

Food Lists

High-Protein Foods

Milk products

Try cheese on toast or with crackers. Add grated cheddar cheese or sour cream to baked potatoes, vegetables, soups, noodles, meat, and fruit. Use milk for cooking in place of water for cereal and cream soups. Include cream sauces on vegetables and pasta. Add powdered milk to cream soups, cereals, and mashed potatoes. Add yogurt or cottage cheese to favorite fruits or blended smoothies.

Eggs

Keep hard-cooked eggs in the refrigerator. Chop and add to salads, casseroles, soups, and vegetables, or make a quick egg salad. All eggs should be well cooked to avoid the risk of harmful bacteria.

Meats, poultry, and fish

Add leftover cooked meats, poultry, or fish to soups, casseroles, salads, and omelets. Make dip by mixing diced or shredded meat or poultry with sour cream and spices.

Beans, legumes, nuts, and seeds

Sprinkle seeds on desserts such as fruit, ice cream, pudding, and custard. Also serve on vegetables, salads, and pasta. Spread peanut butter on toast and fruit or blend in a smoothie or shake. Add cooked beans, lentils, or peas to soups, casseroles, salads, or vegetable dishes.

High-Calorie Foods

Butter and margarine

Stir melted butter or margarine into soups, hot cereals, and casseroles. Melt over potatoes, rice, pasta, and cooked vegetables. Spread on bread for sandwiches before spreading sandwich condiments, fillings, or peanut butter.

Milk products

Add whipping cream or half-and-half to desserts, pancakes, waffles, fruit, and hot chocolate, and fold into soups and casseroles. Add sour cream to baked potatoes and vegetables.

Salad dressings

Use regular, not low-fat or diet, mayonnaise and salad dressing on sandwiches and in dips with vegetables and fruit.

Sweets

Spread jam, jelly, and honey on bread products and crackers. Add to fruit and ice cream and as a topping over cake.
