



## PART 1:

### HOW DOES CANCER TREATMENT AFFECT YOU

#### How Cancer Treatment Affects Eating and Weight

Cancer and its treatments can affect your appetite, digestion, weight, and ability to eat — no matter what type of cancer you have.

Each person's experience is different, but being aware of these changes can help you manage your nutrition better during treatment.



#### Common Side Effects That Affect Eating

Many cancer treatments, such as chemotherapy, radiation, immunotherapy, targeted therapy, and surgery, can lead to:



- Nausea or vomiting
- Loss of appetite
- Taste and smell changes
- Mouth sores or dry mouth
- Difficulty swallowing
- Constipation or diarrhoea
- Fatigue or low energy

These issues can make eating feel difficult or unpleasant, which may lead to unintended weight loss, weakness, or malnutrition.



## Medications Can Change Your Body's Response to Food

Some cancer treatments include medications like steroids or anti-hormonal drugs, which may:

- Increase hunger
- Cause bloating or fluid retention
- Raise blood sugar levels
- Slow down metabolism

This can result in weight gain, even if you're eating normally, especially if your activity level is lower than usual.



## PART 2:

### GUIDELINES FOR DIET DURING TREATMENT



#### Minimise Highly Processed Food

It is advisable to minimise the consumption of highly processed and refined foods, as well as fried foods, as these can contribute to inflammation.



#### Consult Doctor for Supplements

Additionally, it is best to speak with your doctor before starting any supplements, so you may receive guidance that's tailored to your individual health needs.



#### Eat Small Meals

Aim to eat small, frequent meals throughout the day, and try to drink fluids between meals rather than during them.

## PART 2:

### GUIDELINES FOR DIET DURING TREATMENT

#### Take Note: Must Avoid These Foods

During chemotherapy, as the immune system may be weakened, it is particularly important to avoid foods that pose a higher risk of foodborne illness.

These include:



Raw fish or shellfish



Half-boiled eggs or  
foods containing  
raw egg



Unpasteurised  
cheese and  
dairy products



Fruits and vegetables  
that have not been  
thoroughly washed



Foods or drinks that  
are past their  
expiry date



No overnight food

## PART 2: GUIDELINES FOR DIET DURING TREATMENT



**Always wash your hands** before handling or eating food.



Prevent cross-contamination by using **different cutting boards** for raw and cooked items.



**Rinse fruits and vegetables thoroughly** under running water before peeling, slicing, or cooking them.



Thaw meat, poultry, or fish in the **refrigerator's bottom shelf** or in **the microwave** — never at room temperature.



**Avoid refreezing thawed foods**, as this can lower quality and increase the risk of bacterial growth.



Eat cooked food immediately or store it in the refrigerator, or freezer **within one hour** (recommended to prepare only what you plan to eat for a meal).



**Do not reheat rice** and avoid reheating other foods **more than once**.

## **PART 3:** **DIET DURING TREATMENT**



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# Rice & Alternatives



## Foods to Eat (In Moderation)



Cooked rice, porridge, noodles, pasta, oats, chapati, thosai



Commercially produced and packaged breads



Cooked potatoes



Breakfast cereals



## Foods to Avoid



Reheated rice



Buns and baked products from bakeries that are not freshly baked



# Meat & Alternatives



## Foods to Eat (In Moderation)



Thoroughly cooked  
lean meat



Hard-boiled eggs



Cooked tofu



## Foods to Avoid



Raw, or undercooked  
meat, or fish



Meats and cold cuts  
from delicatessens  
e.g. ham, smoked  
salmon, salami



# Milk & Alternatives



## Foods to Eat (In Moderation)



All commercially pasteurised or UHT milk, soymilk



Commercially formulated powdered milk



Pre-packaged single-serve ice cream or sherbet



Cheese made from pasteurised milk, including processed cheese slices



## Foods to Avoid



Unpasteurised dairy products



Commercial milk shakes and blends e.g. Boost Juice



Cheeses not allowed include: Mould-ripened, soft cheeses, cheese from café or fastfood outlets, cheeses containing chilli peppers or uncooked vegetables



# Vegetables



## Foods to Eat (In Moderation)



Cooked vegetables  
(fresh, frozen, or  
canned)



Fresh or dried herbs  
added to foods during  
cooking



## Foods to Avoid



Salads from  
delicatessens or salad  
bars



Fresh herbs for  
garnishing



All vegetable  
sprouts\*

\*Raw and undercooked sprouts can potentially be contaminated with Escherichia Coli & Salmonella.



# Fruits



## Foods to Eat (In Moderation)



Canned fruits



Well washed, peeled fruits (to consume immediately once fruits are cut and not store leftovers)



Frozen fruits (except berries and banana)



Commercial individually packaged fruit juice



## Foods to Avoid



Grapefruit



Starfruit



Pomelo



Unwashed fruits



Pre-cut fruits from shops or supermarkets



# Fats & Oil



## Foods to Eat (In Moderation)



Butter, peanut butter



Cooking oil



Commercial mayonnaise  
(refrigerate after opening)



## Foods to Avoid



Fresh salad dressings  
e.g. Caesar salad dressing, hollandaise sauce



No re-use of oil for deep frying



# Desserts & Snacks



## Foods to Eat (In Moderation)



Freshly baked or commercial cakes, pies and pastries



Puddings and jelly



Homemade and commercial packaged cookies e.g. Oreo, Marie biscuits



## Foods to Avoid



Cakes and pastry products with fresh cream and fresh fruit toppings or fillings



Cakes, pies, and pastries baked more than 24 hours before consumption



Mass produced snacks from common serving containers e.g. Popcorn



# Beverages



## Foods to Eat (In Moderation)



Boiled water



Ice made from boiled water



Canned or bottled beverages



Tea brewed from commercially packaged teabags



Home-brewed drinks e.g. Barley water, chrysanthemum tea (wash chrysanthemum flowers thoroughly and boil together with water)



## Foods to Avoid



Tap water



Water from public water cooler and dispensers



Commercial cold drinks made in bulk e.g. syrups, bubble tea



Open drinks left at room temperature for more than 1 hour



# Others



## Foods to Eat (In Moderation)



Salt, granulated sugar  
& brown sugar



Commercial packaged  
spreads e.g. Kaya,  
peanut butter  
(refrigerate after  
opening)



Commercial  
pasteurised honey



Tomato ketchup, chilli  
sauce, soy sauce, BBQ  
sauce (refrigerate  
after opening)



Soups (canned or  
home-made)



## Foods to Avoid



Raw or unpasteurised  
honey



Herbal supplements



## PART 4: DIET AFTER TREATMENT COMPLETION

Focus on maintaining a **healthy, well-balanced diet** to support your recovery and overall health. There is **no scientific proof** that any particular food you take will prevent cancer from recurring.



Source: Health Promotion Board, Singapore

You may wish to consider the recommendations from the Health Promotion Board by following

3 simple steps to create a healthy and balanced plate:

1. Fill **half** your plate with fruit and veggies
2. Fill a **quarter** with wholegrains
3. Fill a **quarter** with meat and other lean proteins

Visit the Health Promotion Board website to read more about nutrition:  
<https://www.healthhub.sg/programmes/nutrition-hub/eat-more>.

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**Cancer Treatment & Care**

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## Our Locations



## Our Doctor Profiles



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