



CANCERcare®

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# Tips for Managing Nausea and Increasing Appetite During Cancer Treatment

Nausea is a common side effect of chemotherapy and radiation. You may also experience other symptoms, such as a feeling of fullness, a change in the way foods taste, strong heartburn, or feeling too tired to prepare a meal. Talk with your doctor about anti-nausea medications to ease or prevent symptoms. There are also a number of things that you can do on your own to help yourself feel better.

## MANAGING NAUSEA

*These simple steps often go far in helping you cope with the nausea associated with chemotherapy or radiation:*

- Rinse your mouth often to eliminate any bad taste.
- Distract yourself with music, television, or other activities you enjoy.
- Wear loose-fitting clothing that doesn't bind or add stress to your body.
- Avoid strongly scented foods, which can bring on nausea.
- Explore how your taste buds may have changed. Determine what foods taste good to you now.



*If you have just had a bout of nausea and vomiting:*

- An hour or so after vomiting, try taking small sips of fluids or sucking on ice chips. This helps to settle your stomach.
- Eating crackers or toast may also help. Because they are mild, these foods are good choices for putting something back into your stomach without causing upset.
- Having someone stay with you can give you the gentle encouragement you need to relax, which also helps to settle your stomach.

## INCREASING YOUR APPETITE

*Do your best to maintain a nutritious diet during and after cancer treatment. Eating right isn't just about making you feel better. It is also important for your health and recovery. We suggest the following tips:*

(over)

- Make the atmosphere more pleasant during mealtime by using colorful place settings, flowers, or background music. Arrange your plate attractively and garnish your food.
- Eat smaller meals frequently throughout the day rather than two or three big meals.
- Have snacks between meals.
- Establish a pattern of eating meals and snacks at the same time each day. Stick to this schedule, even when you are not hungry.
- Keep snacks handy. People tend to eat more when food is readily available.
- At times when your appetite is not good, rely on foods you really like.
- If you cannot eat enough food to maintain your weight, try high-calorie, high-protein drinks prescribed by your doctor.



### **CancerCare® Can Help**

CancerCare's professional oncology social workers are available to help you cope with cancer and treatment side effects such as nausea and vomiting. We provide free individual counseling and support groups over the telephone, online and in person. CancerCare also offers education, practical help, and referrals to other resources. To learn more, call **1-800-813-HOPE (4673)** or visit [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org).



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Help and Hope

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