

Nutrition Information for Patients Having Radiation Treatment for Head and Neck Cancer (Vegan Options)

Nutrition Information for Patients Having Radiation Treatment for Head and Neck Cancer

Vegan Options

If you have any concerns, please ask to speak with a dietitian.

One of the most important parts of your care is getting enough nutrition and hydration. This can be difficult, as radiation can affect your taste and ability to eat and swallow. Your goal is to take in enough food and fluids to keep your weight stable and your body hydrated. To meet your nutrition needs, you will probably have to increase the calories and protein in your diet. Once your treatments begin, you will be referred to the cancer centre dietitian to discuss your nutrition and hydration requirements during your cancer treatments.

It is important for you to continue to eat your regular diet until problems arise.

The next few pages have suggestions for ways to:

- increase your protein and calories
- manage your diet
- deal with common eating problems that may arise

Vegan options for increasing protein:

Food	How to Use
Soy milk powder/soy milk/soy yogurt	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add to cold foods such as shakes and smoothies.• Add to foods such as mashed potatoes, cooked cereals, soups and sauces, hot chocolate and casseroles.• Add to baked goods such as pancakes, muffins, biscuits, etc.

Vegan options for increasing protein (continued)

Food	How to Use
Peanut, pumpkin seed, and sunflower seed butter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add to muffin, cookie, pancake, and waffle mixes. • Spread on crackers, bread, fruit, and vegetables. • Stir in warm cereal, ice cream, yogurt, and milkshakes.
Nuts, seeds (if mouth and throat are not sore)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sprinkle ground nuts and seeds on ice cream, yogurt, puddings, cereals, stews and salads. • Mix with dried fruit for trail mix. • Add ground nuts to muffin and cookie mixes.
Beans, lentils, grains, chickpeas and Textured Vegetable Protein (TVP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add to casseroles, soups, stews, salads, chili, dips and spreads. • Spread hummus on soft bread or use as a dip. • Use white rice, quinoa, bulgur, or wild rice as side dishes.
Tofu	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mix silken style into smoothies, sauces, soups and chowders. • Add to casseroles, soups, and stews. • Cubed for stir fry. • Crumble for a scrambled egg alternative.
Wheat germ and ground flaxseed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sprinkle onto yogurt and cereal. • Add to muffin, cookie, pancake and other mixes.
Nutritional yeast	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sprinkle on casseroles, vegetables, and salads.

Vegan options for increasing protein (continued)

Nutritional supplements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you are unable to eat enough regular foods, you may need to add drinks that are rich in protein and calories such as Vega One® products. These drinks are called supplements. Experiment with some of your favorite foods and new recipes.• Shakes/smoothies are also supplements that you can make at home by adding soy milk powder/protein powder.
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Vegan options for increasing calories

Food	How to Use
Fruits and Vegetables	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use avocado in sandwiches and dips.• Make fruit into crisps or cobblers.• Choose fruit packed in syrup.• Put peanut butter on apples, bananas, celery or carrots.• Add fruit to smoothies.
Grain products	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add brown sugar, or peanut butter to warm cereal.• Use jams, jellies, brown sugar, or syrup on cereals, pancakes, French toast and waffles.

Vegan options for increasing calories (continued)

Food	How to use
Dairy alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add soy milk to mashed potatoes, sauces, smoothies, shakes, soups, batters, cereals, and hot chocolate.• Use soy coffee whitener or canned coconut milk as a cream substitute.• Use Earth Balance Buttery Spread® or Becel Vegan® as a butter/margarine substitute.• Choose Silk Cultured Coconut®, Yogo Coconut®, or PC Coconut Milk Yogurt® as yogurt substitutes.• Choose Daiya Shreds®, Gusta Grating Blocks®, or Earth Island Slices® as cheese substitutes.• Use Dairy Free Ben and Jerry's®, Non Dairy Haagen Daz®, So Delicious Non Dairy Frozen Dessert® as an ice cream substitute.• Use Daiya Cream Cheese Style® spread, Tofetti Better Than Cream Cheese® for cream cheese substitutes.• Use Veganaise or Vegan Hellman's® as a mayonnaise substitute.

Vegan options for increasing calories (continued)

Food	How to use:
Meat alternatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Spread nut butters on soft breads.• Spread hummus on breads or use as a dip.• Add ground nuts and seeds to baked goods, and cereals.
Nutritional Supplements	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• If you are unable to eat enough regular foods, you may need to add drinks that are rich in protein and calories such as Vega One® products. These drinks are called supplements. Experiment with some of your favorite foods and new recipes.• Shakes/smoothies are also supplements that you can make at home by adding soy milk powder/protein powder.

The Dietitian can provide recipes for you and guide you in the amount of supplements to use daily.

Tips for managing your diet:

- Make every bite count by choosing foods that are high in calories and protein.
- Eat small meals and snacks often. Try to snack every 2 hours.
- Always have snack foods available to eat when you feel hungry.
- If your appetite changes during the day, try to eat your biggest meal when food is the most appealing.
- Improve your appetite by going for a short walk and enjoying fresh air and activity.
- If you are not eating solid food, aim for 6-8 cups of high calorie, high protein liquids each day. Try milk alternative shakes, smoothies, or nutritional supplements.

How to help with a dry mouth:

- Eat foods that are moist or soft.
- Prepare foods in cream sauces.
- Soften foods with gravy, broth, sauces or melted butter.
- Moisten foods with lukewarm tea/coffee, or milk alternative.
- Eat soft fruits with low acid such as melons.
- Eat canned fruits with low sugar.

- Drink low acid fruit juices such as peach, pear or apricot.
- Take 2-3 sips of liquid with each bite of food, to help foods go down.
- Try to drink 6-8 cups of liquid each day.
- Carry a bottle of water with you to help moisturize your mouth.
- Limit drinks containing caffeine (coffee, tea, cola drinks, energy drinks) as they can increase dryness of the mouth and throat.
- Avoid alcohol or mouthwash containing alcohol.

How to make swallowing and chewing easier:

- Grind, chop or puree vegetables. Mix with cream sauces, gravy, broth or mix with other foods in a casserole.
- Eat canned or cooked fruits, or fruits pureed in a blender. Infant strained fruits are an option.
- Make rich soups of creamed or blended vegetables, or beans, peas and lentils.
- Cook warm cereals in milk alternative instead of water and eat when lukewarm. Serve them with margarine, butter, or cream alternatives.
- Have milk alternative ice creams, puddings, custards and shakes/smoothies.
- Cook vegetables until tender and puree in the blender. Infant strained vegetables are an option.

Tips for eating/drinking with a sore mouth or throat:

- Try drinking liquids with a straw unless it makes you cough or clear your throat. If this occurs, please discuss with the dietitian or speech language pathologist.
- Have 5 to 6 small meals a day, instead of 3 larger meals.
- Drink frequently throughout the day and with meals (high protein, high calorie).
- Food and drink should be at room temperature.
- Change the texture of foods to make them easier to chew and swallow i.e chop, mince, mash or puree.
- Avoid rough dry foods that can scratch and irritate the mouth and throat.
- Limit foods such as citrus fruits and juices, tomatoes and foods made with tomato sauce, pepper, or hot sauce.

Tips for taste changes:

- Rinse your mouth out before and after meals to help clear your taste buds.
- Cold food has less taste and smell. If you find smells bother you, try cold foods. To strengthen tastes, try warm foods.
- Get rid of cooking smells by using an exhaust fan or cook on an outdoor grill.
- Try new foods- you might find something that tastes good.

If food tastes:	Try:
Salty	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Adding sweet flavours, such as cinnamon, fruit, or sugar.• Low salt or low sodium products.
Sweet	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A pinch of salt in milk alternative puddings, ice cream, yogurts, and canned fruits.• Nutritional supplements with coffee flavor.• Adding acidity by using lemon, lime and vinegar as long as your mouth is not too sore.
Bland	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Alternating bites of different tasting foods during a meal.• Adding more salt, herbs and spices as long as your mouth is not sore.• Strong flavoured foods like spaghetti.
Metallic or bitter	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Using glass pots and plastic utensils.• Fresh or frozen food instead of canned.• Using lemon candies, mints or gum after a meal as long as your mouth is not sore.

The Dietitian can provide recipes for you and guide you in the amount of supplements to use daily.

Looking for more health information?

Find this brochure and all our patient resources here: <http://library.nshealth.ca/cancer>

Contact your local public library for books, videos, magazines, and other resources.

For more information, go to <http://library.novascotia.ca>

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The information is not intended to be and does not constitute health care or medical advice.

If you have any questions, please ask your health care provider. The information in this pamphlet is to be updated every 3 years or as needed.