

Drink lots of fluids. This is important to protect your kidneys and bladder from the effects of chemotherapy. Everyone needs at least two litres (eight cups) of fluid a day. If tap water tastes awful at this time, try adding a slice of lemon/lime. Fruit juices, milk, soups, yoghurt and even carbonated drinks help to keep your fluid intake up and provide some essential glucose for energy. Avoid coffee and tea as these are diuretics (they may increase water loss).

Nausea:

Ask for anti-nausea medications from your doctor. Other steps that you can take include taking small but frequent snacks. Choose foods with no strong odour/aromas. Some women also find dry crackers useful to get over the empty-stomach feeling during these times. Foods that you can try are: chicken soup, toast with some honey, dry crackers, yoghurts, cottage cheese, plain steamed rice, flat ginger ale.

Sore Mouth and Metallic Taste:

Try out different textures and flavours. Some women find fruit juices and carbonated drinks useful at this time. Avoid eating too much high protein foods like meat. Mouth gargles with baking soda in water or fizzy drinks may help.

Remember to go back to the Healthy Eating Plan once your symptoms have lessened.



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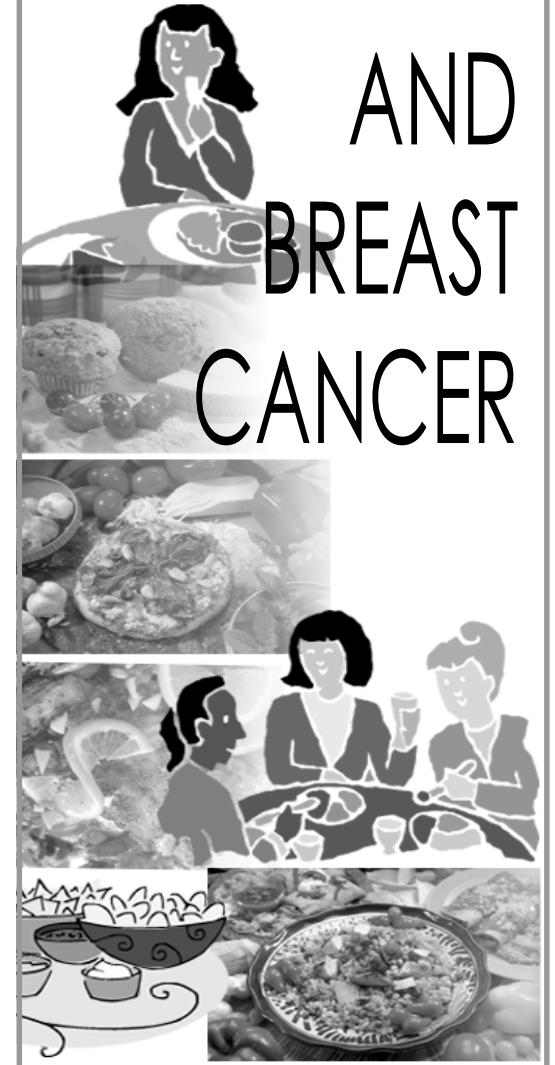
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NUTRITION AND BREAST CANCER



Once you have been diagnosed with breast cancer, you will need to have treatment. This may be in the form of surgery, radiation and/or chemotherapy. Surgery and chemotherapy increases your body's demand for energy and protein in order to heal and also to maintain your internal defences against infection. Chemotherapy drugs can damage both healthy and cancerous cells. Hence some common side effects do occur. These could be:

- loss of appetite
- changes in taste and smell
- mouth sores
- nausea and/or vomiting
- diarrhoea or constipation
- fatigue
- changes in body weight (gain or loss)

It is important for you to know that there are ways to help yourself through this difficult time. In this leaflet there are tips and simple explanations on how to meet the nutritional demands during and after treatment and how to cope with some of these side effects.

" I'm getting lots of confusing advice. Don't eat sugar, don't eat meat. Take carrot juice every day. Eat lots of taufu. What do I do?"

You are not alone. Talk to women who have gone through the treatment. You can meet them at your support group meetings (you will find the contact numbers in your Comfy Kit).

One of the ways to minimise the side effects and help yourself through this time is to follow the Healthy Eating Plan. Eating well helps you to:

- feel better
- keep up your strength and energy
- keep up your weight and your body's nutrient stores
- tolerate treatment effects better
- decrease your risks of infection and
- heal and recover quickly.

THE HEALTHY EATING PLAN

Take a variety of foods from each food group every day. Choose foods with lower fat content more often.

(A) GRAIN PRODUCTS:

Choose whole grains and enriched products. Have at least 5 servings per day.

Examples of grains are wheat, rice, oats, rye, barley, tapioca.

Examples of grain products are bread, buns, crackers, muffins, bagels, pasta and tortillas.

(B) VEGETABLES AND FRUITS:

Choose dark green and orange vegetables and orange coloured fruits more often.

Have at least 5 servings per day.

Examples of green leafy vegetables are spinach, lettuce, kangkong, kailan, choysam.

Other foods in this group are carrots, oranges, apples, corn, broccoli, peas, bananas.

(C) MILK PRODUCTS:

Choose lower fat products and have at least 3 servings per day.

Examples are fresh milk, yoghurt, cheeses, cream, ice cream

(D) MEAT AND ALTERNATIVES:

Choose leaner meat, poultry and fish as well as dried peas, beans and lentils more often.

Have 2-3 servings per day.

Examples are meat, chicken, fish and dhal, peas, lentils, legumes as well as tofu.

(E) OTHER FOODS:

These include the foods that we eat because they are tasty and provide enjoyment but do not belong to a particular food group. Examples are sweets, desserts, higher fat foods and snacks. Eat these in moderation.

DURING TREATMENT:

If you do not feel like eating, choose a food that is appealing to you. There is no harm in eating cookies or even a can of fizzy drinks. These are the foods classified as "other foods" in the Healthy Eating Plan. They will help you keep your energy levels up during the days after treatment. You can always catch up on your nutrition when the side effects of nausea are less. Eat small meals frequently. Keep active even though you feel lethargic. You will find that walking helps to make you feel less tired.