

Nutrition for Pancreas Cancer

Weight maintenance during cancer treatment is important to avoid delays or dose reductions in planned therapy. It is also important to support adequate healing and recovery. Nausea/vomiting, changes in bowel habits, and decreased appetite may prevent you from eating well and maintaining your weight.

If you have diabetes, be sure to follow closely with your endocrinologist or the provider that is helping you manage diabetes.

Pancreatic Enzyme Replacement Therapy

If you are experiencing any of the following symptoms or bowel movement characteristics below, you may require pancreatic enzymes to help with the digestion and absorption of foods. Talk to your doctor or dietitian if you are having any of these symptoms.

Symptoms

- Excessive gas (belching, flatulence, bloating, abdominal fullness)
- Feel full quickly when eating
- Cramping or pain with meals
- Stomach makes excessive noise
- Cramping or pain with bowel movements
- Oil visible in toilet after a bowel movement
- Gas or bowel movements that are foul or rotten smelling
- Ongoing weight loss even when you are eating a normal amount

Bowel Movements

- Floating, fluffy, or puffy
- Loose or unformed
- More frequent than usual
- Large in size
- Yellow or light tan

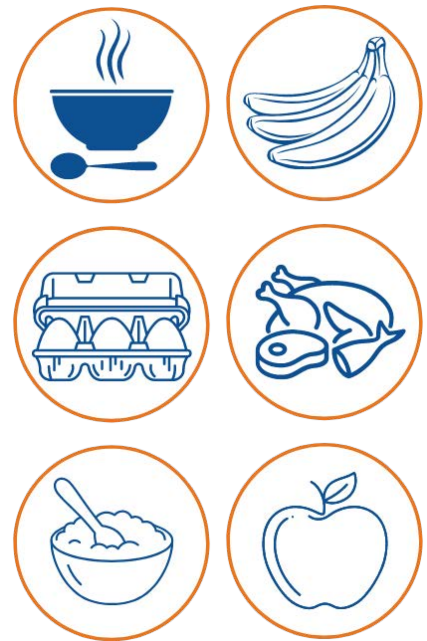
Diarrhea

Diarrhea is having loose or watery stools 3 or more times in one day. Uncontrolled diarrhea can lead to weakness, dehydration, poor appetite, and weight loss.

- Take your antidiarrheal medications as prescribed.
- Drink plenty of mild and room temperature clear liquids throughout the day to prevent dehydration. Fluids recommended include water, Gatorade[®], Pedialyte[®], and unsweet tea.
- Eat small meals and snacks instead of 3 large meals.
- Avoid fatty, spicy, greasy, fried, overly sweet foods, and raw vegetables and fruits with skin/seeds.

Recommended Foods for Diarrhea:

- High-sodium foods, such as broths, soups, crackers, and pretzels
- High-potassium foods, such as fruit juices, potatoes without skin, and bananas
- Low-fiber foods, such as white bread, applesauce, white rice, eggs, Jell-O[®], baked chicken, and fish
- Foods that contain soluble fiber will help absorb water, firm up loose stools, and slow digestion; examples of foods high in soluble fiber include oatmeal, saltine crackers, apples with skin, oranges, carrots, and psyllium fiber supplements (Metamucil[®] and Citrucel[®])



Take 2 Imodium[®] capsules (or liquid-equivalent) after your first loose stool. Take 1 Imodium capsule (or liquid-equivalent) after every subsequent stool.

Nausea/Vomiting

It is important to keep your nausea under control because the inability to eat and drink can cause weight loss and dehydration.

- Take your nausea medication as prescribed.
- Bland foods served at cool or room temperature might be easier to eat than hot or spicy foods.
- Avoid foods that are very fatty, spicy, greasy, or sweet.
- Consume beverages between meals rather than with meals. Avoid carbonated beverages.
- If you are vomiting frequently, rinse your mouth, wait 30 minutes, and then try to sip clear liquids (apple juice, electrolyte drinks, and broth) as often as possible.

Recommended Foods for Nausea/Vomiting:

- Toast, saltine crackers, rice, pretzels, oatmeal, plain noodles, and bagels
- Apple, cranberry, and grape juice, Ensure[®] Clear, ginger tea, ice pops, and sherbet
- Boiled or baked meat, fish or poultry, and scrambled eggs
- Cream soups made with low-fat milk, broths, and nonfat yogurt
- Potatoes, vegetable juices, and canned or fresh fruits



Tips for Decreased Appetite

- Eat 6-8 small meals/snacks throughout the day instead of 3 large meals.
- Fill Ziploc® bags with high-calorie, high-protein snacks, such as chewy granola bars, peanut butter crackers, and cereal.
- Eat the most when you are hungriest and drink beverages in between your meals.
- Get exercise and regular movement.
- Take snacks with you wherever you go.



Oral Nutrition Supplements

Try to choose a supplement with at least 350 calories per bottle. Ensure® Plus and BOOST Plus® can be found at most grocery stores and pharmacies. If you are experiencing diarrhea and/or nausea and are unable to tolerate dairy, Orgain® Protein, Kate Farms™, or Owyn™ Complete Nutrition shakes are great options. If you have diabetes or high blood sugar levels, talk to your dietitian for other options.



- Blend supplements with ice cream or a banana and peanut butter to increase calories and protein.
- Try to drink a supplement as a snack rather than as a snack or meal.

If you have any nutrition questions, please reach out to your dietitian, Anna Sewell, M.A., RD, LD, at **214-645-5271** or **Anna.Sewell@UTSouthwestern.edu**.