

# 9

# NUTRITION



Good nutrition is important for all children. A child with a cancer diagnosis may have additional nutritional needs or challenges. Speak to your child's healthcare team about any foods that should be avoided or any special precautions that should be taken. Some foods can interact with cancer treatments or make them less effective. Good nutrition during cancer treatment can help your child feel better, avoid treatment delays and recover faster.

**Nutrition for Children.** The Dietary Guidelines for Americans recommends for anyone aged 2 years and older to include the following foods in their menus:

- A variety of vegetables and fruits
- Whole grains
- Low-fat dairy products
- A variety of protein foods, including plant proteins
- Oils

The guidelines also recommend limiting saturated and *trans*-fat, added sugars and sodium.

Infants and toddlers under 2 years of age have different nutritional needs.

A child's nutritional needs depend on his or her age, sex, and health. A child who is receiving cancer treatment may need additional calories or protein. To get specific recommendations for your child's nutritional needs, talk to your child's healthcare team and ask for a referral to a registered dietitian with expertise in pediatric oncology nutrition.

**Strategies to Encourage Healthy Food Choices.** Children develop eating habits early in life and carry these habits into adulthood. All children should learn how to make good food choices. You can use the following strategies to teach your children healthy eating habits:

- Be a role model. One of the best ways you can teach your child good nutrition and lifestyle habits is to follow them yourself. Let your child see you eating a lot of vegetables, fruits, whole grains, healthy fats and lean proteins.
- During your child's treatment, take care of yourself by making good food choices, too. Proper nutrition can provide you with more energy and reduce your risk for diseases.
- Include your child in food preparation and other kitchen activities. As age-appropriate, let your child help with grocery shopping, food preparation and meal planning. For example, let younger children pick out the produce at the store. Let older children help stir pots or measure spices. Your child will learn important life skills and gain a new appreciation for food. Picky eaters may even be more likely to try a new food if they have helped to prepare it.

**WOULD YOU LIKE TO  
SPEAK ONE-ON-ONE  
WITH A REGISTERED  
DIETITIAN?**

To schedule a personalized nutrition consultation, visit [www.LLS.org/nutrition](http://www.LLS.org/nutrition) or contact an LLS Information Specialist at **(800) 955-4572**.

**TIP:**

Nutrition advice is everywhere, but it's not all good information. Be cautious of nutrition advice that you find online, in magazines or advertisements and advice offered by well-meaning family members and friends. Make sure you get nutrition information from a reliable source by talking to a registered dietitian.

- Eat together as a family. Share meals together as a family. When planning a meal, try to make dishes that everyone enjoys, but do not fall into the trap of being a short-order cook for your child by preparing completely separate meals just for him or her. (Bear in mind that if your child is receiving cancer treatment, he or she may have specific dietary needs. In this case, separate meals may be necessary.)
- Introduce foods again, again and again. If your child doesn't like a food the first time you serve it, try again. Children may need to try a food many times before they begin to enjoy it. The Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics suggests it may take up to 15 tries before a child accepts a new food.
- Encourage a colorful plate. Children often gravitate toward high-carb, starchy or bland foods, such as chicken nuggets, macaroni, fries and bread. Teach your child to eat a rainbow of foods—not just brown or tan ones. Eating a variety of different colored fruits and vegetables is a good way to get many different healthy nutrients. Half the plate should be filled with vegetables and fruits.
- Make fruits and vegetables available. Leave whole fruits, such as apples or bananas, out for your child. Keep cut up fruits and veggies in the fridge. If healthy snacks are readily available, your child is more likely to eat them.

Remember: Follow appropriate food safety guidelines. See **Food Safety** on page 3.

- Limit buying packaged, processed snacks. Similarly, do not keep snacks with little nutritional value, such as cookies, candy and chips, in your home. If they are available, your child will eat them and ignore other healthier options.
- Follow a plant-based menu. You do not need to serve meat with every meal. In fact, it is best to include a variety of protein sources in your menus, such as beans, peas, soy, legumes, nuts, nut butters and seeds. Make mealtimes exciting for your child by doing “Meatless Mondays” or choosing another set night for vegetarian meals.
- Add “secret” vegetables. Add extra vegetables to dishes your child already enjoys so he or she will eat more of them. For example, add mushrooms, zucchini or carrots to spaghetti.
- Keep your child hydrated. Provide water to keep your child hydrated. If your child doesn't like plain water, offer him or her water with slices of fruits or sparkling water for its fizz. Avoid sodas and other sugary drinks. Some “fruit drinks” branded for children have a lot of added sugar. Watch out for them and choose 100% fruit juice instead.
- Avoid using food as a reward. Typically, candy, desserts or other sweet snacks are used as rewards. These items generally have little nutritional value and may take the place of other foods with more nutritional value. Use stickers or verbal praise instead to reward your child.
- Teach your child to avoid alcohol. Talk to your teenager about alcohol use, even if you believe he or she does not drink. It may be dangerous to consume alcohol while taking certain medications or receiving certain cancer treatments. Alcohol also contributes to dehydration, and it provides no nutritional benefits.
  - If adults in the home drink alcohol, keep all alcoholic beverages in a secure location to prevent your child from getting them. Any adult caring for your child should refrain from drinking unless another adult is present to administer medications to your child and/or in case of an emergency. If you worry about how much a loved one drinks, visit <https://al-anon.org/> or ask members of the healthcare team for resources.

**Vitamins and Supplements.** Food is the best source for the vitamins and nutrients your child needs. However, during cancer treatment your child may have difficulty getting enough calcium and vitamin D, both of which are important to build strong bones. Ask your child's doctor or a registered dietitian if your child needs a multivitamin or some other supplement. **Do not give your child any vitamins or supplements without consulting your child's healthcare team first. Some vitamins and supplements can interfere with cancer treatment.**

## TIP:

While your child is receiving cancer treatment, it may be neither possible nor practical to follow all of these suggestions. Your child may experience side effects that make eating difficult (See **Managing Side Effects With Nutrition** on page 7). The healthcare team may provide specific guidelines to follow. Modify nutrition strategies as needed.



For more on childhood nutrition, visit [www.healthchildren.org](http://www.healthchildren.org), a website from the American Academy of Pediatrics.

For information on nutrition for infants and toddlers, visit

- [www.cdc.gov/nutrition/infantandtoddernutrition](http://www.cdc.gov/nutrition/infantandtoddernutrition)
- [www.nutrition.gov/audience/infants](http://www.nutrition.gov/audience/infants)

**Malnutrition.** Malnutrition is a common but serious concern for children who have cancer. Side effects from treatment, such as a sore mouth, nausea or loss of appetite, can make eating difficult or unpleasant for your child. A child will become malnourished if he or she is not receiving or absorbing proper nutrition (the right amount of calories or nutrients needed for healthy bodily function). Your child will become malnourished if he or she is not eating enough, not eating the right foods, or if his or her digestive system cannot absorb and use food efficiently. Children with cancer who are diagnosed with malnutrition are at greater risk for health complications, hospitalizations, infections, loss of muscle strength and poor quality of life.

To decrease the risk of malnutrition, your child should avoid losing weight during treatment unless advised to do so by the healthcare team. Losing weight can lower your child's energy levels and ability to fight infection.

Watch for the signs of malnutrition in your child. Signs of malnutrition include

- Unintentional weight loss
  - For infants and toddlers, no increase in weight can also be a sign of malnutrition.
- Loss of appetite
- Changes in food intake
- Side effects that make eating difficult for your child

Take this short quiz to see if your child may be at risk for malnutrition. Check either Yes or No for each question.

NUTRITION STATUS	YES	NO
Has your child lost weight in last few weeks/months? Or, has your child not met weight and growth expectations based on age and sex?		
Is your child eating less due to decreased appetite?		
Has your child's food intake changed?		
Do side effects make it difficult for your child to eat (eg, nausea, taste changes, mouth sores, trouble swallowing, diarrhea, constipation, dental issues)?		
Does your child no longer enjoy mealtimes as much as he or she did before cancer?		

If you checked "Yes" to one or more of the questions above, alert the healthcare team. Your child may be at risk for malnutrition. Ask for a referral to a registered dietitian who specializes in pediatric oncology nutrition for strategies to improve your child's nutrition status.

**Food Safety.** Cancer and cancer treatment weaken your child's immune system. It is important to pay special attention to food safety guidelines to reduce your child's risk of being exposed to potentially harmful bacteria from spoiled or undercooked foods.

**Preparing Food for Your Child.** Following these guidelines while preparing food will reduce the risk of foodborne illness. Share them with children who may be preparing some meals and snacks on their own.

## **Keep Everything Clean.**

- Wash hands often and thoroughly, especially before and after handling any food. Be sure to wash hands with warm water and soap for at least 20 seconds. Pay special attention to fingernails and the backs of the hands.
- Keep raw and cooked foods separate. Do not reuse any utensils, cutting boards, plates or dishes once they have been touched by raw meat or eggs. Utensils, cutting boards, plates and dishes, that have been used for preparing raw meats or eggs should be washed in hot, soapy water. It is best to keep one cutting board for meat and another for fruits/vegetables. Have an extra clean cutting board available for additional preparation as well.
- Rinse fruits and vegetables before cutting or peeling them. Clean the lids of canned foods before opening them.
- Disinfect all food preparation surfaces, including sinks and countertops, both before and after cooking. Use an antibacterial kitchen cleaner and paper towels or bleach wipes.
- If you use dish clothes or sponges, replace or wash them frequently.

## **Cook Food Thoroughly.**

- Avoid raw and/or undercooked meats, fish and eggs (for example, sushi, undercooked eggs, and other meats that have not been cooked to a proper internal temperature).
- Cook eggs until both the white and the yolk are firm. Avoid foods that may contain raw eggs, such as raw cookie dough, homemade mayonnaise and homemade Caesar dressing.
- Use a meat thermometer to make sure that all meats are cooked to the proper internal temperature before they are eaten. Use the chart below for reference.

MEAT	INTERNAL MINIMUM TEMPERATURE
Ground beef, pork, veal, or lamb	160°F
Turkey	165°F
Chicken	165°F
Steak or other cuts of beef	145°F Allow to rest 3 minutes before carving or eating
Pork	145°F
Seafood	145°F
Egg dishes	160°F
Casseroles	165°F
Reheated leftovers	165°F

Visit **foodsafety.gov** for more on cooking food to a safe internal temperature.

**Avoid Foods Associated with Foodborne Illness.** In addition to undercooked meat, these foods include

- Unpasteurized beverages, such as unpasteurized juice or raw milk
- Unpasteurized cheeses such as soft mold-ripened and blue-veined cheeses, including Brie, Camembert, Roquefort, Stilton, Gorgonzola and blue
  - You may be able to find pasteurized versions of these cheeses which are safe to consume, unless otherwise directed by the healthcare team. Check the label.
- Raw sprouts, such as alfalfa sprouts
- Well water, unless tested, filtered or boiled for 1 minute before drinking or boiled for 3 minutes before drinking in altitudes of about 2,000 meters (about 6,562 feet or higher).
- Ice from ice machines in public places
- Frozen drinks, soft-serve ice cream, or frozen yogurt from bulk machines
- Open drinks left at room temperature for 1 hour or more
- Spices added after cooking
- Berries (All other washed fruits, or any that are cooked or canned, are okay.)
- Unwashed fruits and vegetables

Review this list with members of the healthcare team.

### **Store Food Safely.**

- Always store cold foods and leftovers within 1 hour of purchasing or cooking or as soon as possible.
- Discard leftovers or open packages within 2 days. If you are unsure if something is safe to eat, remember, **WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT.**
- Label cold food packages (use a marker or pen) with a “use by” date if the packaging does not have an expiration date. Visit [www.foodsafety.gov/food-safety-charts/cold-food-storage-charts](http://www.foodsafety.gov/food-safety-charts/cold-food-storage-charts) for more guidelines.
- Put foods with the soonest expiration date at the front of the fridge or shelves so that you are more likely to use them.
- Do not thaw food at room temperature. Thaw in the refrigerator, under cold water or in the microwave.

### **Be Careful When Eating in Restaurants.**

- Buy only from trusted vendors with high grades in health department inspections.
- Avoid buying food from street vendors.
- Do not eat free food samples when shopping.
- Do not choose restaurants with buffets when eating out. If you are at a party, ask if your child can go through the buffet line first.
- At restaurants, ask for meat to be prepared well done.
- If you are going to take home leftovers, ask to bag the food yourself and make sure to refrigerate the leftovers quickly.

**If You Suspect a Foodborne Illness.** If your child or anyone living in your home gets a foodborne illness, have a plan. Alert the healthcare team as soon as possible. Symptoms of foodborne illness include fever, diarrhea, nausea, vomiting and/or stomach cramps. Mark any recently eaten food or beverage as “do not eat.” Keep the containers in the fridge in case the healthcare team wants to test any of the foods.

**Teaching Your Child About Food Safety.** You may not always be with your children when they are eating. Here are simple things you can teach all your children about food safety.

- Wash your hands regularly. Your children should wash their hands frequently, especially before eating, after using the bathroom, after playing with other children or pets or playing outside. Teach your children to wash their hands with warm water and soap for 20 seconds by counting to 20 slowly or singing the ABCs.
- Keep food on the plate. Don't put food or snacks on dirty surfaces such as counters, tables, and floors. Even if it looks clean, it may not be. Always use clean plates or napkins.
- Rinse fruits and veggies with water before eating or cutting. Rinsing fruits and vegetables helps remove any remaining dirt or germs.
- Some foods need to stay cold. You probably already know which foods need to stay in the refrigerator or freezer, but your children may not. Let your child know where specific foods belong in your kitchen. Remind your child to always shut the refrigerator and freezer doors.
- Always store food properly. Give your children instructions on how to store food safely, such as always closing lids tightly or sealing the zip lock bag. Do not leave any foods uncovered or out in the open.
- Pack school lunches safely. Use an insulated lunch bag and pack an ice pack or frozen drink to keep cold foods cold. Keep the lunch bag out of direct sunlight. After school, wipe out the bag with a disinfecting wipe. Tell your children to throw away anything they didn't eat at lunch. Do not save cold foods to be eaten later in the day.
- Do not share food with others. If your child is immunocompromised, tell your child not to share food or drinks with other people. Unless the person is an adult who has washed his or her hands, do not eat food that other people have touched. Do not eat food that another person has bitten. If someone asks for your food, politely tell the person "No."
- **WHEN IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT.** Teach your children that if something has a bad smell or has been in the refrigerator or pantry for a long time, it may not be safe to eat. Tell them to check the expiration date or ask an adult to check it for them. If they are unsure about a food, they must not eat it. Even foods that don't look, taste, or smell bad can contain harmful bacteria.
- Talk about which foods to avoid. Review the list of foods to avoid on page 5 with your child so that he or she can decline them if you are not there.



Visit the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) at [www.nutrition.gov/audience/children/kids-food-safety](http://www.nutrition.gov/audience/children/kids-food-safety) to find activities, games, and resources to teach your children about food safety.

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**Neutropenia and Diet.** "Neutropenia" is a condition characterized by lower-than-normal numbers of neutrophils (a type of white blood cell that helps fight infection). If your child has neutropenia, the healthcare team may recommend special food guidelines for immunosuppressed patients. The guidelines will spell out ways to protect your child from bacteria and other harmful organisms found in some food and drinks.

If your child has had a stem cell transplant, his or her diet restrictions may be stricter than those of other patients who received chemotherapy alone without a transplant.

Members of the healthcare team may refer to these guidelines as a "neutropenic diet" or you may encounter the term elsewhere. This diet was supposed to help patients with neutropenia to learn how to decrease exposure to bacteria and other harmful organisms found in some foods; however, a universally-accepted definition of what foods should be included or excluded was never developed.

In a review of studies, the neutropenic diet was never proven to decrease exposure to bacteria in food. Safer preparation and handling of foods is more important than restricting the intake of specific food groups because a

balanced diet and optimal nutrition are the most significant concerns for patients who are coping with chemotherapy and other treatments.

Food guidelines for immunosuppressed patients vary among cancer centers. Ask the healthcare team for any special instructions for your child.

**Managing Side Effects With Nutrition.** Children with a cancer diagnosis may face challenges when it comes to nutrition. Side effects from cancer treatment, such as nausea, vomiting, decreased appetite or mouth sores, can make it difficult to make good food choices or eat enough nutrient-rich foods. During and after cancer treatment, children may lose weight or develop more slowly. Children may also gain weight due to treatment with corticosteroids or decreased activity levels.

Ask your child's doctor for a referral to a registered dietitian who specializes in pediatric oncology treatment.

**Track Side Effects and Food Intake.** By tracking and recording your child's food intake and side effects, you may be able to identify food and/or behaviors that make side effects worse. Then you can adjust mealtimes and your child's diet accordingly. For example,

- Does a large breakfast keep your child energized throughout the day?
- Is a certain food causing gas or diarrhea?

You can also share this record with members of the healthcare team and discuss side-effect management.



Use **Worksheet 13: Food Intake and Side-Effects Log**.



**LLS Health Manager™ App.** With LLS Health Manager™, you can now use your phone to manage your child's daily health by tracking side effects, medication, food and hydration, questions for the doctor, grocery lists and more. You can also set up reminders to take medications and to eat/drink throughout the day. Visit [www.LLS.org/HealthManager](http://www.LLS.org/HealthManager) to download.

**Tips to Boost Food Intake.** During cancer treatment, your child may have difficulty eating. Your child may experience nausea and/or vomiting. Mouth sores may make eating painful. Treatment can change your child's sense of taste and smell so that he or she may turn down foods once enjoyed or decide that new foods taste better. Your child may not have much of an appetite or desire for any food. Always alert your child's healthcare team to new or worsening side effects. The following tips can help you to increase your child's food intake and manage side effects:

- Regularly offer favorite, easily tolerated foods. Even if your child says he or she is not hungry, seeing the food may spark an appetite. If your child asks for a specific food, try to provide it when possible.
- Your child's tastes may also change so he or she may turn down foods that were once favorites or request new foods.
- Note when your child's appetite is at its best. Provide as much nutritious food as possible during this time.
- Always keep snacks available in case your child does feel hungry. If your child is in school, ask your child's teacher to allow your child to eat snacks during class.
- Make mealtimes fun; eat together as a family; have a "picnic" in the living room or backyard; use colorful plates and cups or plates with favorite cartoon characters. (Stick with plastic utensils. Metal utensils can leave a metallic taste in the mouth.)
- Get rid of distractions, such as toys and games, and switch off the TV at mealtimes.
- Praise good eating.
- Do not force your child to eat or to clean the plate. It may make him or her feel sick and make eating even less appealing.
- Keep strong odors that may trigger nausea away from your child. Use cups with lids and straws. Serve foods at room temperature, as hot foods tend to have a stronger smell.

- Let your child sip liquids between meals, instead of at meals, to leave more room for food.
- Add extra calories to dishes by adding high-calorie foods. For example, use whole milk in cereal, add cheese to cooked vegetables, or dip apple slices in peanut butter.
- If your child is struggling with mouth sores, prepare soft, bland foods that are easier to eat. Cold foods, such as popsicles, smoothies and milkshakes, can also help soothe a sore mouth. Avoid foods that are too hot as they can irritate the sores.
- If your child has trouble swallowing, serve moist foods, such as bananas, applesauce, cooked vegetables, gelatin, soups, pudding and ice cream. Cut foods into small pieces, as needed.
- Provide foods that promote healthy bowel function, especially if your child experiences constipation. High-fiber foods include whole grains, beans, lentils and the skins of fruits and vegetables. Encourage your child to drink extra liquids after eating high-fiber foods to aid in digestion.
- If your child experiences diarrhea, avoid high-fiber, spicy, fried or high-fat foods. Choose white rice, applesauce, cooked vegetables, and low-fat meat and dairy instead. To stay hydrated, your child should drink lots of clear liquids, such as water, ginger ale, sports drinks or electrolyte replacement drinks. Call the healthcare team if your child's diarrhea is severe as children can become dehydrated quickly.
- Ask members of the healthcare team or a registered dietitian if your child would benefit from a liquid nutrition supplement drink.
- Practice good dental and mouth care as directed by members of your child's healthcare team. The mouth is the first stop for turning food into fuel. Check with your child's cancer treatment team before scheduling any visits to the dentist. A child in cancer treatment may need to take special precautions at the dentist.



For more tips and strategies that you can use to manage specific side effects, visit [www.pearlpoint.org/SideEffects](http://www.pearlpoint.org/SideEffects) to view all of the side-effect management webpages.

For more on nutrition, visit [www.LLS.org/PediatricWebcast](http://www.LLS.org/PediatricWebcast) to watch the prerecorded webcast *Nourishing the Pediatric Patient During Cancer Treatment*.

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**Grocery Shopping Tips.** With children and the demands of everyday life, it may be hard to find time to go to the grocery store. Here is where friends and family members can really provide help. Ask a friend or family member to go to the grocery store for you. Provide a list and arrange a drop-off time.

If you are going to do the grocery shopping yourself, the following tips can make the trip easier:

- Shop with a list. Make copies of a standardized grocery list, which includes perishables such as milk and bread. Add to it each week. Include in-season fruits and veggies and add any new items you will need to accommodate special dietary needs or guidelines provided by the healthcare team.



Use **Worksheet 11: Grocery List** to put together and maintain a fully stocked pantry.

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- Keep cold foods at a safe temperature until you are able to put them in your own refrigerator or freezer.
  - Shop when the temperature outside is cooler (for example, earlier in the day).
  - Bring a cooler for refrigerated or frozen foods.
  - Choose room temperature items first. Pick up your cold and frozen foods right before you pay.
- Learn more about organic foods. "Organic" means that the produce was grown and harvested without the addition of any pesticides or chemicals. For the word "organic" to be used on a label, the product must meet certain United States Department of Agriculture (USDA)-approved guidelines.



If you are interested in buying organic foods but cost is a concern, visit the Environmental Working Group website for a list of foods with the least amount of pesticide residue ([www.ewg.org/foodnews/clean-fifteen.php](http://www.ewg.org/foodnews/clean-fifteen.php)) and a list of foods with higher amounts of pesticide residue ([www.ewg.org/foodnews/dirty-dozen.php](http://www.ewg.org/foodnews/dirty-dozen.php)). The foods with less pesticide residue can be bought conventionally to save money.

- Use coupons. Look online and in the newspaper for coupons. Some specialty products can be pricey. Check out the product's website for coupons or contact the manufacturer.
- Save the receipt to keep track of how much you spend. Record the amount in your budget later.
- Shop when stores are not likely to be crowded. The grocery store may be less crowded early in the day on weekdays, as many people tend to shop after work or on weekends.
- Check out food delivery and pickup services. Many grocery stores now offer pickup and/or delivery services. You send a list to the store ahead of time. A store employee then puts together your grocery order. Once your groceries are ready, you go to the store, and an employee loads them into your car. Some online retailers also offer food delivery services.
- Coordinate meals with friends and family members. Friends and family members may want to help you to prepare meals or provide meals. Keep a list on the refrigerator of who will bring what and when. You can also use online resources to help with meal planning and coordination.



Use an app or check an online site to coordinate delivery of meals from family members and friends.

- [TakeThemAMeal.com](http://TakeThemAMeal.com)
- Meal Train ([www.mealtrain.com](http://www.mealtrain.com))
- CareCalendar ([www.carecalendar.org](http://www.carecalendar.org))



Use **Worksheet 14: Meal Planning** to plan meals in advance.

**Meal and Snack Ideas.** Meals and snacks do not have to be elaborate to be healthy and nutritious. Combine foods from different groups, such as protein, fruits, vegetables or complex carbs to create a complete meal. Try some of the following easy meal and snack ideas that require minimal cooking.

**Keep in mind that these meals and snacks are only suggestions. Make changes, as necessary, to accommodate food allergies or to follow nutrition guidelines provided by your child's healthcare team.**

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## BREAKFAST

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- Scramble an egg to eat with whole-wheat toast and a glass of low-fat milk. Serve some grapes on the side.
- Mix a whole-grain cereal with low-fat milk and a banana.
- Make oatmeal with low-fat milk instead of water. Mix in blueberries, cinnamon and walnuts.
- Top whole-grain toaster waffles with strawberries and reduced-fat cream cheese.
- Mix a low-fat yogurt with peaches and raisins. Top with low-fat granola.



- Try a whole-grain muffin paired with low-fat milk and pineapple.
- Pair whole-grain grits with a fresh orange and a hard-boiled egg.
- Make a berry smoothie by blending 1½ cups of mixed strawberries and blueberries, ½ cup of low-fat or nonfat yogurt, 1 cup of ice and a splash of low-fat milk.
- Spread peanut butter on a toasted whole-wheat bagel topped with sliced bananas.
- Make a breakfast sandwich with a whole-wheat English muffin, egg and slice of cheese. Pair with an apple.

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## LUNCH

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- Pair sliced, grilled or baked chicken with a slice of Swiss cheese, spinach leaves and tomato slices on whole-wheat bread. Heat in a pan on the stove for a couple of minutes for a hot sandwich. Pair with a peach.
  - Try low-sodium tomato soup with a grilled cheese sandwich and a pear.
  - Top whole-wheat English muffin halves with pizza sauce, tomatoes and shredded mozzarella to make a mini margarita pizza. Place in the oven or toaster oven to heat. You can add peppers or basil for taste. Add a side salad with dried cranberries and vinaigrette.
  - Mix tuna from a foil pouch or can with low-fat mayonnaise to make tuna salad. Put on toasted whole-wheat bread with lettuce and tomato. Pair with grapes and string cheese.
  - Roll sliced, grilled or baked chicken, a cheddar cheese slice, mustard and lettuce in a whole-wheat tortilla. Pair with cucumber slices and an apple.
- Mix a low-fat Greek yogurt with raspberries and blackberries and top with almonds. Serve a salad made with favorite vegetables, such as peppers, cucumbers, tomatoes or onion. Add a favorite salad dressing.
  - Make a sandwich with peanut or almond butter and banana slices on whole-wheat bread. Pair with low-fat cottage cheese and grape tomatoes.
  - Try a quesadilla made with a whole-wheat tortilla, shredded cheese and bell pepper strips. Heat in a pan on the stove or in the microwave. Top with tomato salsa and pair with a plum.
  - Microwave or bake a potato, top with low-sodium chili, shredded cheese and broccoli.
  - Try a chicken wrap made with a whole-wheat tortilla, with hummus or tomato and feta cheese. Pair with melon chunks.



## DINNER

- Spaghetti: Top whole-wheat spaghetti noodles with a sauce made with ground turkey, crushed tomatoes, green peppers and onion. Add low-fat cheese, if desired. Pair with a side salad with a favorite dressing.
- Chicken stir fry: Stir-fry cubed chicken breast with red peppers, onions, carrots and broccoli in olive or canola oil. Serve with whole-grain brown rice. Finish with a dessert of mandarin oranges and low-fat yogurt.
- Loaded baked potatoes: Top a baked or microwaved potato with shredded cheese and chili. Add additional toppings, if desired. Serve with steamed broccoli.
- Black bean tacos: Fill corn tortillas with black beans, lettuce, tomato, diced cucumbers and shredded cheese for delicious vegetarian tacos. Top with salsa and avocado. Serve with diced cantaloupe for a complete meal.
- Roasted chicken and veggies: Roast sliced zucchini and squash topped with a little olive oil, pepper and Parmesan cheese. Serve with baked chicken breasts and a whole-grain roll.
- Grilled salmon salad: Prepare a green salad with dark, leafy greens, such as spinach or romaine, and top with grilled salmon, feta cheese, sliced almonds, mandarin oranges, raisins, cucumbers, tomatoes and a favorite dressing. Serve with a slice of whole-grain toasted bread.
- Burger: Top a cooked lean beef, ground turkey or veggie burger with a low-fat cheese slice, lettuce, tomatoes, and onions and serve on a whole-wheat bun. Pair with a corn and tomato salad and a side of strawberries, watermelon and blueberries.
- Soup with grilled cheese: Pair a homemade or store-bought vegetable and bean soup with a grilled cheese and tomato sandwich on whole-grain bread. Add a fruit and low-fat yogurt smoothie for dessert.
- Hawaiian pizza: Assemble a homemade Hawaiian pizza using a premade whole-wheat pizza crust, pizza sauce and low-fat shredded cheese. Top with pineapple, cubed cooked chicken, mushrooms, peppers and onions and bake. Serve with a side salad.
- Shrimp and veggies: Heat precooked shrimp on the stove top. Add a small amount of olive oil, lemon juice, garlic and pepper. Serve with sides of roasted tomatoes, asparagus, and a whole-wheat roll. Serve a bowl of fresh strawberries for dessert.
- Dinner omelet: Prepare an omelet that includes sliced mushrooms, tomatoes and onions. Serve with a fresh green salad and roasted new potatoes.
- Veggie casserole: Cook macaroni and cheese pasta; stir in steamed veggies, such as broccoli, cauliflower and carrots. Toss in cooked tofu, ground beef, turkey or chopped chicken. Serve cooked apples or sliced peaches for dessert.



## SNACKS

- Trail mix or mixed nuts
- Whole fruits, such as apples, bananas, plums or grapes
- Raw veggies, such as carrots, bell peppers, or cucumbers, or whole-grain crackers and hummus
- Low-fat yogurt cups
- Low-fat string cheese or cheese cubes
- Boiled eggs
- Peanut butter sandwich or crackers
- Tuna or salmon with crackers
- Liquid nutrition-supplement drink
- Fruit smoothie with nonfat yogurt



## TIP:

Take snacks for you and your child with you when you have a long appointment or on treatment days.  
Use an insulated lunch bag with an ice pack for refrigerated items.  
Don't forget bottles of water so that you can both stay hydrated.



More places to find recipes and meal suggestions:

- PearlPoint Nutrition Services®: [www.pearlpoint.org/recipe](http://www.pearlpoint.org/recipe)
- American Institute for Cancer Research: [www.aicr.org](http://www.aicr.org)
- Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: [www.eatright.org](http://www.eatright.org)
- Cook for Your Life: [www.cookforyourlife.org/caterogry/kid-friendly](http://www.cookforyourlife.org/caterogry/kid-friendly)

# Nutrition Notes

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