



# CANCER NUTRITION CONSORTIUM™

Nutritional Guidance & Support

## TREATMENT COMPENDIUM | Issue No. 8

RESEARCH, RESOURCES, AND RECIPES TO HELP PEOPLE  
DURING CANCER TREATMENT AND RECOVERY

- » MEAL PLANNING
- » GETTING READY  
FOR CHEMOTHERAPY
- » 2 DELICIOUS RECIPES

# Meal Planning



## What's for dinner?

It's a question we are all too familiar with and one that seems overwhelming and complicated at times. However, once you find a strategy that works for you, you will soon find that meal planning can help save time and energy, cut down on food waste, and decrease the stress and uncertainty around eating because you already have a plan in place. Here are several strategies for planning and prepping balanced meals:

### START BY THINKING ABOUT THE TYPES OF FOOD YOU AND YOUR FAMILY ENJOY EATING

You can think of it by cuisine type like Italian, Mexican, or Thai. You can also think of it by type of food for example, soup, pasta, tacos, or crock pot meals. Make a list of some of your go-to quick and easy recipes that fall into these categories and that you feel confident making. Use this list as a starting point when planning out your week.

### CREATE A FLEXIBLE PLAN THAT ALLOWS FOR LIFE TO HAPPEN

Some people find it helpful to assign meals to specific days of the week, but that doesn't have to be set in stone. Maybe it feels better to just write down four or five dinner options on a piece of paper and not assign them to specific days. Either way, having a plan that is flexible is key. It's also helpful to have a backup plan in case whatever you had planned doesn't work out for whatever reason. Breakfast for dinner is the perfect example of a backup plan you can implement any day of the week. Think of things like omelets or frittata with some leftover roasted vegetables. It may also be helpful to build in a day or two for leftovers so that you are cooking once and eating multiple times.

### TAKE INVENTORY OF WHAT YOU HAVE ON HAND

and make your grocery list from there. Think about what needs to be used up in the refrigerator or freezer and brainstorm ways to incorporate those things into your plan for the next week. This will help reduce food waste. It can be helpful to go into the grocery store with a list organized based on your store's layout. For example, have produce in one column, dry pantry goods in the next, followed by dairy or refrigerated foods, and then a section for frozen items. This can help you navigate the store efficiently with less chance of forgetting something.

### KEEP A WELL-STOCKED PANTRY AND FREEZER

This can be a game changer for busy nights. If you are making soup, make a double batch and freeze half as a future gift to yourself. Keep frozen vegetables on hand for a quick and easy side dish. Keeping a well-stocked pantry with versatile basics can help you create meals even when you feel like there is nothing in the house to eat.

### SOME STAPLES TO CONSIDER ARE:

- ✦ Olive or avocado oil
- ✦ Broths or stocks
- ✦ Grains such as brown rice, quinoa, farro or whole wheat pasta
- ✦ Beans and lentils
- ✦ Nuts, nut butters, and seeds

### STREAMLINE DINNER TIME BY FINDING A FEW MINUTES TO PREP THINGS AHEAD OF TIME

Chop up vegetables, make a sauce or a dressing, marinate your chicken or start thawing something from your freezer. Doing these things earlier in the day or the night before can make dinner time run more smoothly for everyone.

### CONSIDER BATCH COOKING SEVERAL COMPONENTS OF MEALS AT THE START OF THE WEEK

For example, make a large sheet pan of roasted vegetables. Cook a batch of whole grains. Bake or grill a few extra chicken breasts. By doing these things ahead of time, you now have several components ready to incorporate into other recipes throughout the week or simply assemble into something like a grain bowl instead of having to cook each night. Curious about how to make a grain bowl? Start with a base of whole grains like quinoa, farro or brown rice. Next, add some vegetable toppings. This could be whatever raw vegetables you have in the refrigerator like cucumbers, carrots, or salad greens. It can also be some leftover roasted vegetables, like broccoli or sweet potatoes. Next add a protein source that you enjoy such as grilled chicken, baked tofu, beans, or even cheese. Finally add a healthy fat like nuts, seeds, hummus or avocado. These make a quick and easy lunch or dinner option!

### WHEN IN DOUBT, KEEP MEALS SIMPLE

Aim to build plates at mealtimes with 50% of your meal coming from colorful vegetables or fruit, 25% from whole grains and 25% from lean proteins. By following this method, you are putting an emphasis on plant-based foods which offer many different phytonutrients or immune supporting properties. Whole grains include things like brown rice, quinoa, oats, barley, millet, and whole grain breads and cereals. Animal sources of protein include chicken, turkey, fish, eggs, milk, cheese and yogurt. Plant-based foods can also be a source of protein including nuts, nut butters, seeds, beans, lentils, hummus, or soy foods.



# GETTING READY FOR Chemotherapy

The days following a cancer diagnosis can be the most anxiety-provoking time period in the life of a cancer patient. There are many unknowns, and patients face treatments and procedures that are unfamiliar to them.



Patients may feel out of control due to the newness of chemotherapy, medications, and terminology to which they have never been exposed. They wonder how they are going to handle treatment and if they are going to experience side-effects. The good news is that focusing on nutrition can help to bridge the gap of unfamiliarity as chemotherapy treatment approaches.

Adequate hydration and healthy eating builds our bodies with every sip and bite! Subsequently, hydrating and eating well are important patterns to establish before chemotherapy begins.

**What can patients do to support their nutritional status in the days leading up to treatment? What do dietitians mean by adequate hydration and healthy eating?**

## FLUID SETS THE TONE FOR CHEMOTHERAPY TO GO WELL

with minimal side effects. It bathes the cells and removes the byproducts of cellular respiration, flushes chemotherapy through the body, and provides an environment for calories and protein to support the rebuilding of red and white blood cells. Cell regrowth is essential to keeping treatment on schedule.

Most people do not understand how much fluid, not just water, their bodies need to function optimally. Fluid is anything that would be liquid if allowed to sit at room temperature. The standard "64 ounces per day of fluid" may be grossly-inadequate for people who weigh more than 141 pounds, or are obese.

In addition, waiting for thirst to trigger drinking cannot be relied upon, because as we age our thirst sensors on our tongues decrease, with thirst lagging behind actual fluid need up to 40%. Therefore, the result can be that we are a liter of fluid below our needs by the time we sense thirst, resulting in dehydration.

Dehydration impacts several side-effects associated with chemotherapy. It increases chemotherapy and heightens side-effects, causes nausea, fatigue, and taste changes and increases likelihood

of constipation. It is often difficult to separate the effects of chemotherapy from symptoms of dehydration, as you can see. Therefore, getting adequately hydrated before and staying hydrated through treatment can head off many unpleasant side effects.

**An easy way to calculate fluid needs is: Weight in pounds / 2.2 = Weight in kilos = ounces of fluid needed per day.** An easier way is to ask a registered dietitian to assist you in the calculation, or to calculate your goal for you if you think you may be over 120% ideal body weight.

It is also helpful to include two to three sources (8 ounces each) of fluids that have sodium, such as broth, milk, Gatorade, Powerade, or even soup. The sodium acts like a sponge and helps pull the fluid into the body so you will benefit from it more and not flush the sodium out of your body. Even IV fluid has sodium, so there is no concern about a small amount of sodium in your fluid intake. It is both necessary and helpful to prevent dehydration.

## EAT CALORIES IN SMALL MEALS OR LARGE SNACKS, FIVE TO SIX TIMES PER DAY

Because you need more calories to support your current weight throughout treatment, not to make you gain weight, frequent eating supports that higher calorie need. Getting in the habit of this eating pattern helps to get you used to eating more often. It is also beneficial to avoid higher fat foods leading up to treatment, as they can also slow digestion and add to symptoms around treatment.

In addition to assisting getting adequate calories, this eating pattern also fosters better bowel regularity. Constipation is a familiar and unpleasant side-effect of the medications to prevent nausea which are provided around the time of chemotherapy. As a result the intestines slow down and constipation is common. Smaller amounts of food traveling through to be processed work better than three large meals. If you are already plagued with constipation as your regular bowel pattern, please discuss this with your dietitian, nurse or doctor prior to starting treatment.

## INCLUDING A PROTEIN SOURCE AT ALL MEALS AND SNACKS

is the easiest way to meet elevated needs for protein during treatment. Calories support protein, which supports the rebuilding and regrowth of cells between treatments. It is another good habit to include protein before starting treatment. Ask yourself prior to eating, "where is the protein on my plate?" This simple step is often adequate in covering the difference between regular needs for protein and those needs during treatment.

Establishing treatment eating patterns in the weeks and days leading up to chemotherapy treatment can make eating once treatment has started just that much easier. Food then becomes second-nature and it is easier to comply with hydration, and focusing on adequate calories and protein through frequent eating. Once established as a habit, these patterns carry throughout chemotherapy and will allow for the best outcomes and prevent fatigue.

## INCLUDE 5-10 SERVINGS OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES DAILY

Fruits and vegetables and the simple and expected flavor are most appealing during treatment, work well in the setting of taste changes, and help prevent constipation. A serving is considered to be a 1/2 cup, except for melon chunks, berries and greens which are 1 cup each. In addition, fruits and vegetables build immunity and work with treatment to fight cancer. The more colors included, the better! Put a rainbow on your plate!

Adequate fluids, and frequent healthy eating is the defense against chemotherapy. Food powers you through treatment, rebuilding your body. You may have lost weight leading up to your diagnosis; taking advantage of the days and weeks leading up to the start of chemotherapy can place you in a better position to receive treatment. It can also prevent many of the side-effects, including fatigue and constipation, once treatment begins.

Recipes from Brigham & Women's Hospital – Compliments of the Department of Food Services

## Butternut Squash Soup

**SERVINGS: 8**


**CALORIES: 90**    **FIBER: 3g**  
**FAT: 3g**    **PROTEIN: 1g**  
**SAT FAT: 1g**    **SODIUM: 40mg**  
**CARBS: 17g**

### INGREDIENTS

**3 lbs** BUTTERNUT SQUASH,  
CUBED AND PEELED  
**1** WHITE ONION, DICED  
**1** GRANNY SMITH APPLE, DICED  
**1** LARGE CARROT, DICED  
**4** CLOVES GARLIC, FRESH, PEELED  
**2 Tbsp** OLIVE OIL  
**3 cups** LOW-SODIUM VEGETABLE BROTH  
**2/3 cup** LITE CANNED COCONUT MILK  
**2 1/3 cups** WATER  
**1/2 tsp** SALT  
**1/2 tsp** PEPPER  
**1/2 tsp** NUTMEG  
**1 tsp** GROUND CINNAMON

### DIRECTIONS

Preheat oven to 350° and line two baking sheets with parchment paper

On one baking sheet, toss butternut squash with half of oil and bake for 15–18 minutes or until tender

Spread onion, apple, carrot and garlic onto second baking sheet and lightly toss with remaining oil until evenly coated

Bake for approximately 10 minutes or until carrots and apples are tender

In large pot, combine all baked ingredients (squash, onion, apple, carrot, garlic) with broth, coconut milk, and water, salt, pepper, nutmeg, and cinnamon

Bring to a boil for 2 minutes

Blend ingredients using immersion blender until very smooth. If soup is too thick, add water until desired consistency is reached

## Sweet Potato Brownies

**SERVINGS: 12**


**CALORIES: 200**    **FIBER: 4g**  
**FAT: 13g**    **PROTEIN: 4g**  
**SAT FAT: 1.5g**    **SODIUM: 60mg**  
**CARB: 21g**

### INGREDIENTS

**1 cup** SWEET POTATO PUREE,  
UNSWEETENED\*  
**1/2 cup** APPLESAUCE, UNSWEETENED  
**1/3 cup** MAPLE SYRUP  
**1/2 cup** UNSALTED, UNSWEETENED  
ALMOND BUTTER  
**1/3 cup** UNSWEETENED ALMOND MILK  
**1.5 Tbsp** CANOLA OIL  
**1 tsp** VANILLA EXTRACT  
**2/3 cup** ALL-PURPOSE FLOUR  
**1/2 cup** UNSWEETENED COCOA POWDER  
**1 tsp** BAKING POWDER  
**1 tsp** CALORIE-FREE SWEETENER  
**1 tsp** INSTANT ESPRESSO POWDER  
**1/4 tsp** SALT  
**1/4 cup** CHOPPED UNSALTED PECANS

### DIRECTIONS\*

Preheat oven to 350°

Grease 8x8-inch baking pan and line with parchment paper

Set aside

In large mixing bowl, add sweet potato puree, applesauce, maple syrup, almond butter, almond milk, canola oil and vanilla extract

Mix thoroughly until combined

In separate bowl, mix together all-purpose flour, cocoa powder, baking powder, calorie-free sweetener, instant espresso powder and salt until combined

Add dry mixture to wet ingredients and stir well to combine—batter will be very thick

Fold in 1/2 cup of chopped pecans until just mixed. Transfer batter to prepared pan and spread evenly

Sprinkle remaining 1/4 cup of pecans evenly on top

Bake for 25–30 minutes, or until toothpick comes out clean and edges appear slightly dry

Cool for 1 hour and cut into 12 pieces

\*If you would like to make sweet potato puree at home: bake 1–2 large sweet potatoes wrapped in aluminum foil at 400° until completely soft, about 30 minutes.

Scoop out inside and mash.





## COMFY T-SHIRTS FOR CHAMPIONS BATTLING CANCER

Each t-shirt purchase helps us accomplish our important mission to help more people get through cancer treatment.

T-shirts & other products available at [shop.CancerNutrition.org](http://shop.CancerNutrition.org)

## CNC Carepack Grant Initiative Update

1400+ Carepack donations as of June 2021!



Many people undergoing treatment don't have the resources they need to get adequate nutrition.

The CNC initiated a Carepack Grant program, with additional support from Hormel Foods to provide free nutritional care packs to help them in their time of biggest need.

Anyone in need of additional nutritional support during their treatment can apply!

» [CancerNutrition.org/Send-A-Carepack](http://CancerNutrition.org/Send-A-Carepack)



## Helpful Nutrition

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CancerNutrition.org offers valuable resources, research, recipes, and answered questions from leading cancer experts in one convenient location. We're here to help!

### VALUABLE RESOURCES

Look at frequently asked questions, or ask your own. Read more articles and download our partner, Dana Farber's mobile nutrition app! All sources under the **'Resources'** tab on [CancerNutrition.org](https://cancernutrition.org) offer reliable suggestions and resources to help answer your questions about cancer nutrition.



### RECIPES FROM 16 CHEFS



Adi Goldberg & Ron DeSantis are only two of the chefs featured on the Cancer Nutrition Consortium. View all chef recipes & bios at [CancerNutrition.org/chef](https://cancernutrition.org/chef)



### DONATE TO HELP OTHERS

We are providing healthy, tasty nutrition to patients during their cancer treatment, who may not be able to otherwise afford it. Your gifts provide much-needed nutrition to a patient in need. Any size donation is helpful and appreciated. Click the **'Donate'** tab on [CancerNutrition.org/make-a-donation](https://cancernutrition.org/make-a-donation)



### 120+ RECIPES






All recipes featured on our website were carefully crafted by chefs, nutritionists, and cancer patients. These unique recipes offer functional nutrition and great taste for those undergoing cancer treatments. View more recipes at [CancerNutrition.org/recipes](https://cancernutrition.org/recipes)

## Our Mission

The Cancer Nutrition Consortium recognizes the importance of food and nutrition to positive medical outcomes of cancer treatment. Our recipes and recommendations incorporate a wide range of insights. Key among them is that they can be adopted at home to make life easier for patients to achieve optimal health during cancer treatment.

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