

# LIVING HEALTHY AS A CANCER SURVIVOR: NUTRITION

A cancer survivor is a person who has been diagnosed with cancer. They are considered a survivor for the rest of their life.

- There are both physical and emotional side effects of cancer and its treatment. These side effects will impact survivors in different ways.
- Choosing healthy behaviors is important. You can lower your risk of getting cancer again through exercise, eating healthy foods and not being overweight.
- This document provides survivors with information on ways to live healthy after treatment ends. The document should not replace consultation with a health care provider. It is important that all survivors see their health care provider for regular medical care.

## Make Good Food Choices

Eating good quality food can help you to decrease feelings of fatigue, build a strong immune system, and lose weight.

Talk to a dietitian or your health care provider about ways to eat healthy as you recover from your cancer and its treatment. Some cancers have special nutrition needs.

General nutrition guidelines include:

- Eat foods with whole grains, including brown rice and whole grain bread.
- Eat 2 cups of vegetables and 1 ½ cups of fruit every day.
- Limit foods with a lot of sugar like candy, desserts or pop and a lot of salt to one time per day or less.
- Food with protein like nuts, eggs, beans, fish, and lean red meat are good for healing.
- Avoid high calorie foods without lots of nutrients, like potato chips.
- Drink at least 8 to 10 glasses (8 ounce) of water each day. Check with your health care provider if you have heart or kidney problems.
- Try to eat 5 or 6 small meals instead of 3 larger meals.
- High quality snacks (like fruits and vegetables) between meals can increase energy and help manage blood sugar levels.
- In general, men should not have more than 2 alcoholic drinks per day, and women should not have more than 1 alcoholic drink per day. Talk to your health care provider about how much alcohol is right for you.



## Shopping for Healthy Food on a Budget

For some people, buying high quality foods can be a challenge. The following ideas may help you to buy and eat high quality food:

- Think about what fruits and vegetables you enjoy and will eat.
- Plan before you go to the store. Think about what food would taste good as leftovers, like soups and casseroles.
- Look for coupons and get a loyalty card for your grocery store.
- Visit a farmer's market to buy fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Consider buying items in bulk that you use all the time.
- Try to buy food when it is in season and at a lower cost.
- Take time at the store to compare prices of different food brands.

## Helpful Resources for Survivors

- For more information on food tips, visit the [Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics' website: http://www.eatright.org/](http://www.eatright.org/)
- For personalized information on eating, exercising, and weight management, visit the [American Cancer Society's SurvivorSHINE website: https://survivorshine.org/](https://survivorshine.org/)



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