



Healthy Eating and Activity After Cancer

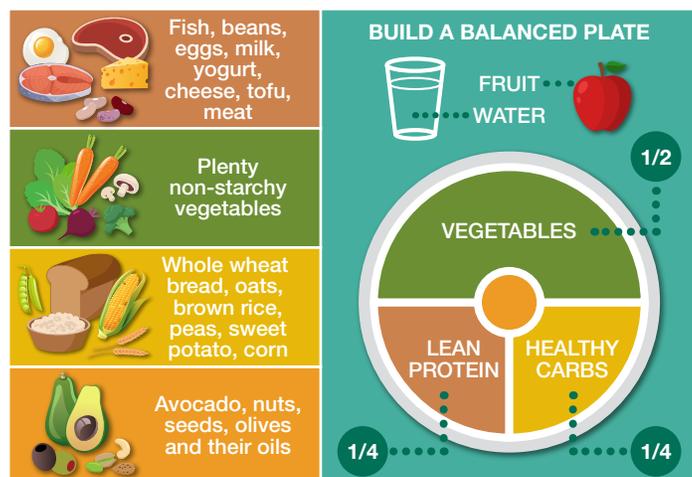
Now that you're done with treatment, you're ready move forward with your life in as healthy a way as possible. And one of the best approaches for doing that? Eating a healthy diet and being physically active.

Together, they can help lower the risk of cancer returning, improve quality of life and mobility, and lower the risk for other illnesses, such as heart disease, bone loss and diabetes.

Eat a healthy, well-balanced diet that has the right amount of calories, carbohydrates, protein and fats for your body.

Try these tips:

- Include a variety of foods every day – grains, proteins, fruits and vegetables.
- Don't skip meals. Missing meals can slow your metabolism.
- Eat several servings of vegetables and fruit each day. They can be fresh, frozen or canned.
- Include high-fiber foods (whole-grain breads, cereals, beans) and aim for around 25g of fiber daily.
- Favor baking and broiling foods.



- Stay hydrated with around 64 ounces of water daily.
- Limit salt-cured and processed meat (bacon, sausage and most deli meats) and red meats to 2-3 servings per week.
- Limit alcohol. Zero is best.

Get back in touch with your body's signals.

Our body sends us signals to help us know when we're hungry, satisfied and full. Hunger can feel like emptiness in the stomach, gnawing or growling, which many people are familiar with. But you may also be irritable and tired, or have trouble focusing on a task. By tuning into the way your own body signals hunger, you can learn to honor these signals and eat when you start to have them.

Try these tips:

- Avoid distractions when you eat, such as watching TV, driving or reading.
- Eat slowly and chew foods well. Rushing through a meal can lead to feeling "stuffed" before you know it.
- Pause partway through your meal to check in with your signals to see if you're still hungry or if you're starting to feel full. Stop eating when you are pleasantly full and feeling satisfied.

Exercise regularly.

On top of its other benefits, physical activity helps build strength, reduce stress and maintain a healthy weight and healthy body. Try to make it a regular part of your week.

- Take it slow. Small, gradual changes will keep you motivated.
- Try walking. It's one of the easiest ways to stay active.
- Use the stairs instead of the elevator, park farther away, or do errands by bicycle.
- Include strength building activities, such as band stretches, light weightlifting, yoga or tai chi.

Getting Down to a Healthy Weight after Cancer

Maintaining a healthy weight has many benefits for cancer survivors and it may possibly help lower the risk of recurrence. For some people, getting to a healthy weight means making lifestyle changes to lose weight. Making healthy food choices, being more mindful while eating, and exercising daily, if cleared by your doctor, can help with healthy weight loss. Keep in mind that slow weight loss is healthier than fast weight loss. The usual recommendation is to lose no more than one pound per week.

Try these healthy eating suggestions to help support weight loss:

- Eat more plant foods. Aim for at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables per day and choose plant-based proteins, such as nuts, seeds, beans and legumes.
- Try limiting portion sizes of processed snack foods and items high in added sugars.
- Eat more fish and poultry, and less red or processed meats. Try baking, broiling or air-frying as lower calorie ways to cook meat.
- Choose whole-grain foods (like whole-wheat bread) and over refined sources of carbohydrates (like white bread).
- Stay hydrated by drinking water throughout the day. It may be helpful to carry a water bottle with you when you are away from home.

Try these other healthy changes:

- Be mindful. When you sit down to eat, focus on eating. Chew well and savor every bite. Listen to your body for feelings of fullness and stop eating when you are full.
- Think of food with a positive mindset. Rather than choosing food based on if it is “good” or “bad,” try to choose foods that nourish your body, make you feel energized and strong, and taste good.
- Plan ahead. When possible, plan your meals and snacks for the week. Having nourishing foods available and ready will make it more likely that you’ll eat them. This can also cut down on food waste and save money.
- Be active in everyday life. Exercise is an important part of maintaining a healthy weight. Even light exercise, such as going for a walk, gardening, light housework, golfing, stretching or walking from the back of a parking lot counts as being active!
- Limit alcohol consumption. Zero is best.

It’s important to remember that any positive lifestyle change provides health benefits to your body. Try not to be discouraged if your weight does not change quickly or even at all. Sometimes simply avoiding weight gain and maintaining your current weight is an important goal.

If you need additional support or recommendations, contact a Siteman Registered Dietitian.



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