

NUTRITION IMPACT SYMPTOM MANAGEMENT

Assess nutrition impact symptoms prior to any oncology treatment, weekly during radiation treatment, at each medical oncology clinic appointment, and at follow-up appointments after completion of any treatment.

SYMPTOMS	ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS	NUTRITION PATIENT EDUCATION
Anorexia and Early satiety	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have you noticed that you are not eating as much as you did before treatment? 2. How much food do you eat before you are full? 3. What have you eaten recently that was enjoyable? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat small, frequent meals, usually 5-6 times a day. • Eating calorie-dense foods will help you maintain your weight. • Schedule your meals instead of waiting to feel hungry. You may not feel hungry and therefore will not eat. Try to view eating as part of your treatment. • Keep snacks around so you can eat throughout the day. • Eating a snack before bed will help maintain your weight but will not make you feel full for breakfast in the morning. • Avoid foods and carbonated drinks that cause gas, such as legumes, broccoli, and soda, as they may make you feel fuller and decrease how much you eat.
Constipation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How often do you usually have a bowel movement? 2. How long has it been since your last bowel movement? 3. What is the consistency of your bowel movements? 4. Have you taken any medicine to help pass a bowel movement? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High-fiber diets can help keep more water in the stool, making it easier to pass. • Drinking a hot beverage in a relaxed environment can help stimulate a bowel movement. • Take laxatives as prescribed by your physician. • Drink at least 8-10 cups of liquid each day to help retain the water in your colon so your stool will be easier to pass. • Try to have a bowel movement whenever you feel the urge. • Get as much physical activity as you can each day (i.e. walking). Even a little bit helps.

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Diarrhea	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How many bowel movements are you having each day? 2. What is the consistency of your bowel movements now? 3. Do you have any cramping with bowel movements? <p>(Evaluate for possible <i>Clostridium difficile</i> [C. diff] infection.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stay hydrated during periods of diarrhea as you will lose a lot of water. • Eat a low-fiber diet when experiencing diarrhea. It is easier to digest and will not stimulate your bowel to empty. • Eating 5-6 smaller meals a day is gentler on your stomach and digestive tract. • Diarrhea will cause your body to lose a lot of electrolytes, such as sodium and potassium. To replace what you are losing, eat foods high in potassium. • Foods and drinks that are at room temperature may be less stimulating than extremely hot or cold temperatures. • Greasy, spicy, or sugary foods or drinks are more difficult to digest and may increase the incidence of diarrhea. • Take an antidiarrheal as prescribed by your physician.
Dysgeusia	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do foods taste the same? 2. Do foods taste too salty or bland? 3. What flavors taste good and are enjoyable? 4. Are you eating as much as you did prior to treatments? 5. Are you drinking enough fluids? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add more flavor to food with lemons, herbs, spices, sauces, dressings, and pepper so you are able to taste your food. • Consume tart foods and drinks (e.g., lemon wedges, lemonade, cranberry juice) to mask taste changes. • Eat with plastic utensils and avoid canned foods if you experience metallic tastes. • Add sweeteners, such as maple syrup, agave nectar, honey, or sugar, to foods if you experience a bitter or metallic taste when eating. • Opt for low-sodium and naturally sweet foods if foods taste too salty. • Marinate meat in sweet and sour sauce if meat does not taste right. • Eat cold foods that do not have an odor. • Eat white meats if red meats taste bitter.
Fatigue	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are you able to carry out your normal daily activities? 2. Do you have to take more breaks than normal? 3. Are you staying in bed or on the couch all day? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Schedule meals and snacks. Do not wait until you are hungry because, at that point, you may be too tired to eat. • Eat 5-6 meals a day. Smaller meals are easier to eat. • Eat foods that are easy to chew and swallow (soft and moist) so you do not have to expend too much effort. • Choose recipes that are easy to prepare. When you are feeling better, prepare a couple of meals in advance for the days you are too tired. • Consider quick and easy options, such as finger foods, convenience items, and frozen meals. • Keep a supply of easy-to-grab nutritious snacks on hand, including yogurt, granola or protein bars, trail mix, and oral nutritional supplements.

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Infection	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Have you had any fevers or chills? 2. Have you shown any signs of an infection? 	<p>Prevent foodborne illness by taking these steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold. • Avoid eating undercooked meats and eggs. • Put leftovers in the refrigerator as soon as possible to chill them quickly. • Wash all fruits and vegetables before eating them to clean off any dirt, fungus, and bacteria. • Wash your hands, cutting boards, and knives before and after preparing food of any kind to reduce bacterial contamination. • Use separate cutting boards for raw meats to reduce the risk of cross-contamination with other foods.
Malabsorption	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are there certain foods that you notice cause more diarrhea? 2. Do your stools look oily or float on top of the water? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you have a specific condition such as celiac disease or ulcerative colitis, avoid foods that cause diarrhea. • Avoid caffeine, carbonation, alcohol, and concentrated liquids because these can increase diarrhea. • Limit fat in your diet.
Mucositis	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Do you experience any pain when chewing or swallowing? 2. Are there certain foods that are more painful to swallow? 3. Are you eating less because of the pain? 4. Are you able to drink enough fluids? 5. Are you able to swallow oral medications? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Drink plenty of liquids to help moisten the mucosa and thin the saliva. • Eat soft foods like pudding, soup, and oral nutritional supplements that are easier to swallow. Cook foods until they are soft so they will also be easier to swallow. • Avoid acidic foods such as oranges and tomatoes if they cause pain. • Avoid foods that are too hot or too cold. They may be painful to swallow. • Avoid spicy, rough, or scratchy foods because they may be more painful to chew or swallow. • Cut foods into small bites to make them easier to swallow. • Drink with a straw to direct liquids past any painful ulcers in your mouth. • Moisten your food with gravy, sauce, or salad dressings to make it easier to swallow. Dip dry breads or meats in soup or broth to moisten. • Rinse your mouth with a mixture of 1/4 teaspoon baking soda, 1/8 teaspoon salt, and 1 cup warm water. You may rinse 3-4 times a day or as often as every 2 hours while you are awake. • Do not use mouthwash with alcohol as it could dry your mouth. • Avoid tobacco products, alcohol, and toothpicks as they can cause pain. • Take topical or systemic analgesics as prescribed.

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<p>Nausea</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are you able to keep foods and drinks down? 2. How are you taking your antiemetics? 3. When do you feel the most nauseated? 4. How many times in a day do you have nausea or have you vomited? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Take your antiemetics as prescribed. • If your antiemetics are not working, talk to your oncologist or medical team so they can change the timing, modify your dosage, or add other classes of medication. • Take antiemetics 30 minutes prior to eating to reduce nausea. • Sip 8-10 cups of fluid throughout the day to stay well hydrated. • Avoid foods with a strong odor. When cooking, use an exhaust fan or open windows. Foods with a strong odor may worsen your nausea. • Choose cold foods with no odor (e.g., chicken salad on crackers with grapes on the side). • Eat small, frequent meals to prevent an overfilled or empty stomach. • Do not skip any meals as it may worsen your nausea. • Choose bland foods. Do not consume high-fat, greasy, fried, or highly seasoned foods. This may make the nausea worse. • If you start vomiting, do not consume drinks or foods. Once the vomiting stops, start drinking small amounts of clear liquids. • Use ginger (teas, candies) as a nonpharmacologic way to manage nausea. • Acupuncture, acupressure, and relaxation techniques may help to ease your nausea. • Do not force yourself to eat your favorite foods when you feel nauseated as you may develop an aversion for these foods.
<p>Xerostomia</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Has your saliva gotten thicker? 2. Does your mouth feel sticky or dry? 3. Is it harder to swallow foods? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat foods that are easy to swallow. You do not have any saliva to help break down the food and make it easier to swallow. • Sipping water can help keep your mouth moist when you are not able to produce saliva. • Eating and drinking tart foods and beverages can help stimulate saliva. • Gum and hard candy can help you naturally salivate. • To help make foods easier to swallow, moisten the foods with dressings, gravies, or sauces. Dip dry breads and meats in soup or broth. • Tobacco, alcohol, and mouthwash with alcohol need to be avoided because these can dry out your mouth even more.

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