

What is cancer-related loss of appetite?

Loss of appetite is when you do not have feelings of hunger or interest in food. If you are not able to eat you may lose weight and not be strong enough for your treatments.

What can I do when I do not feel like eating?

1. Ask for a referral to a registered dietitian

A dietitian can help you make a plan to eat and drink when you have no appetite.

At Walker Family Cancer Centre, Call 905-682-6451 and Press 2 to book an appointment with a dietitian.

2. Make every bite count

You need to get enough calories, protein and liquids in your diet to keep up your strength and keep going with your treatments.

Eat and drink often:

- Eat small meals more often instead of 2 or 3 big ones
- Try to have a few mouthfuls of food every 1-2 hours even if you do not feel hungry
- Have easy to eat, nutritious snacks with you like, cheese & crackers, pudding cups, hummus & veggies and yogurt

3. Choose food and drinks that are high in protein

Protein helps your body heal when you are going through cancer treatment.

These foods are high in protein:

- Dairy products like milk, Greek yogurt, pudding and cheese
- Meat, poultry, fish, seafood
- Tofu, soy beverages, nuts, seeds, peanut butter
- Dried peas, beans and lentils
- Eggs

Tips on how to add more protein to your diet:

- Make high protein milk → add 1 cup of skim milk powder to 4 cups of whole milk. Use the high-protein milk in cream soups, stews, gravies and sauces
- Add protein powder to liquid foods or baking

4. Add more fat to your food

Here are some simple ways to make your foods more calorie rich.

Add:	To:
Olive oil, butter or margarine	Noodles, rice and breads
Gravy or sauces	Mashed potatoes and meats
Cream, honey, maple syrup or jams	Fruits, yogurts and desserts
Mayonnaise	Salad dressings, sandwiches, tuna and egg salad
Whipping cream	Soups, custards, fresh fruits, smoothies or sauce
Avocado	Sandwiches, quesadillas or mash it and use as a dip
Nuts and nut butters	Toast, smoothies, snacks
Full fat cheese	Sandwiches, melted on veggies, in sauces or as a snack
Sour cream	Potatoes, dips

5. Drink at least 6-8 cups of liquids each day

Use these tips to help you get enough liquids:

- Drink often throughout the day. Choose liquids with calories like juice, milk, soup and fruit smoothies
- Keep a water bottle with you, filled with your favourite drink
- Limit drinks with caffeine (cola, coffee, tea) and alcohol

6. Eat whatever foods appeal to you

Eat whatever tastes good to you, whenever you feel up to it. Do not worry about sticking to your usual schedule for meals.

Try these tips when deciding when & what to eat:

- Eat your biggest meal of the day when you feel your best. If you feel best in the morning, eat more then
- Eat breakfast foods for dinner or dinner foods for breakfast
- Eat your favourite foods at any time of the day
- Use smaller plates or bowls

7. Eat convenience foods if you have trouble preparing meals

Try these tips to make preparing meals easier:

- Contact your local community meal service program (like Meals on Wheels)
- Buy frozen foods that are easy to put in the oven
- Buy pre-cut vegetables, fruits, cheese and other quick snacks
- Use the deli counter for pre-prepared meats, salads and other foods