

EATING PROBLEMS

Loss of Appetite

- Eat small, frequent meals.
- Vary the odor and texture of foods served to help stimulate the appetite.
- Keep high-calorie, high-protein snacks available for nibbling, such as granola, ice cream, frozen yogurt, candy bars, nuts, cheese and crackers, and puddings.
- Eat when you are hungry. Breakfast is the best meal for most people.
- Try eating a snack at bedtime in addition to other meals.
- Rely on your favorite foods during your not-hungry periods.
- Use commercial liquid supplements that are high in calories and protein.
- Set realistic goals for yourself.
- Exercise before meals; a 5 to 10 minute walk 30 minutes before meals may stimulate an appetite.

Feeling Too Tired To Eat

- Use ready-to-eat convenience foods.
- Accept help from friends and relatives. Provide suggestions of dishes you enjoy.
- Always have easily-accessible snacks on hand, such as granola bars, ice cream, yogurt, pudding, and cheese and crackers.
- Prepare and freeze meals ahead of time when you are feeling good.
- Take advantage of time-saving appliances, such as blenders and microwaves.
- Set realistic goals for yourself.
- If you live alone, you might like to try Meals on Wheels (a service that delivers meals to your home). Contact your physician or social worker for more information.

A Change in or Loss of Taste

- Substitute poultry, fish, eggs, peanut butter, cooked dried beans and peas, and dairy products for meats if they no longer appeal to you.
- Experiment with different sauces, gravies, flavorings, or spices to enhance the flavor of foods or mask the taste.
- Marinate meat, chicken, or fish in sweet fruit juices, wines, salad dressings, or sweet and sour sauce to help improve the taste.

CANCER INSTITUTE PROGRAMS

- Try new and attractively prepared foods to help make your meal more appetizing.
- Try using bacon, ham, or onion to add flavor to vegetables.
- Use fresh or frozen foods rather than canned.
- Try foods cold or at room temperature, such as deviled eggs, chicken, ham, or egg salad, ice cream, milkshakes, puddings, custard, and cheese.
- Try tart foods, such as orange juice, pickles, lemonade, vinegar, and lemon juice to enhance flavors.
- Lemonade, lemon-lime sherbet, and yogurt are good choices in place of sweet juices.
- Fruit juice slushes are a refreshing alternative to milkshakes or you may try adding sherbet to milkshakes for a change.
- Try drinking more liquids such as tea or ginger ale if you have a metallic taste in your mouth. You may also try foods which leave specific tastes in your mouth, such as fresh fruits, hard candies, or gum (preferably sugar free).
- Try using salt to tone down sugary or acidic foods, such as adding salt to watermelon.
- Use plastic utensils and dishes if food tastes metallic.
- Rinse the mouth often with a mixture of mild salt water and baking soda.