



# Easing Side Effects During Cancer Treatment

Side effects are common when undergoing various cancer treatments. Fortunately, there are ways nutrition can help ease these symptoms. It is important to address these side effects, so that your body is better prepared for the next treatment.

Side-effect:	Try:
Weight loss	Eat smaller, more frequent meals throughout the day. Use protein and calorie containing supplements such as whey or soy powder.
Nausea and vomiting	Eat smaller, more frequent meals throughout the day. Drink beverages one half or one hour before meals instead of with meals. Eat bland and soft foods on treatment days. Ginger helps to reduce nausea, and that effect is enhanced when consumed with protein.
Constipation	Drink at least 8 cups of fluid a day; warm fluids & fruit juices are a good choice. Get some physical activity each day, even if it is just light activity. Include plenty of fresh fruit and vegetables and whole grains in your diet.
Diarrhea	Drink plenty of clear liquids to stay hydrated. Choose foods that are easy to digest like applesauce, bananas, and yogurt. Avoid foods that are high in fiber such as raw vegetables and whole grains.
Sore mouth and difficulty swallowing	Eat foods that are soft and moist. Avoid alcohol, highly acidic foods such as citrus and vinegars, and spicy ingredients such as chili and ginger.
Fatigue	Snack frequently. Eat high energy foods that are high in protein and complex carbohydrates such as chicken, beans, lentils, nut butters, and barley.
Loss of taste	Try spiced foods such as pizza, pasta sauce, or chili. Eat strongly flavored foods like sauerkraut or curries. Emphasize texture in meals: crisp, creamy, soft, and crunchy.
Distaste for meat	Replace beef or pork with poultry, fish, and eggs. Eat more legumes in place of meat. Prepare meat in sauces. Eat meats cold or at room temperature.
Loss of appetite	Eat during best times. Eat smaller, more frequent meals. Don't drink with meals. Prepare foods with cinnamon and caraway, which act as appetite stimulants.

## Enhancing Flavor

Rebecca Katz, a chef and nutrition educator at Commonwealth Cancer Health Program in California, has a tool that can help revitalize taste buds and bring flavor to food during cancer treatment. Her tool is called **FASS**, which stands for **F**at, **A**cid, **S**alt, and **S**weet. This is found in her book The Cancer Fighting Kitchen (2009).

Notice what you taste when you are eating, and if it is unpleasant, try one of these easy FASS fixes below to help make eating more enjoyable for you!

If your taste buds are saying:	Use these FASS fixes:
Things have a metallic taste	Add a little sweetener, like maple syrup or agave nectar, and a squeeze of lemon. You could also try adding fat, such as a nut cream or butter.
Things taste too sweet	Start by adding 6 drops of lemon or lime juice. Keep adding it in small increments until the sweet taste becomes muted.
Things taste too salty	Add ¼ teaspoon of lemon juice. It erases the taste of salt.
Things taste too bitter	Add a little sweetener, like maple syrup or agave nectar.
Everything tastes like cardboard	Add more sea salt until the flavor of the dish moves toward the front of the mouth. A spritz of fresh lemon juice also helps.



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