



Your **Wellness Guide** for Living with **Stomach Cancer**



This guide is for information purposes only. It is not intended to substitute the advice of your healthcare team or provide medical diagnosis, treatment, or therapy. Please seek the advice of your healthcare team before making any changes to your medical plan, diet, or physical activity.

WELCOME TO THE WELLNESS GUIDE!

This guide is intended to help you manage your diet by providing tips and advice. A balanced diet with the right amount of calories, protein, vitamins, and minerals is important to help maintain your strength and manage your condition. While it may be difficult to eat, good nutrition is important to your treatment and your health.

A special note for you and your loved ones

You (or the person you care for) are going through a difficult and demanding period of time. Here are some general things to keep in mind:

- Don't be surprised or upset if food preferences change each day. There may be days when you don't want to eat your favorite foods or notice that they no longer taste like they used to
- Try to keep food and drinks within easy reach. This way, you always have a quick snack when you're ready to eat
- Don't push yourself too hard to eat. If you have no appetite, make sure to drink plenty of liquids instead
- Talk with each other about ways to manage any eating problems that come up. If possible, go see the doctor or dietitian together

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The key takeaways from this guide:

Eat a **balanced diet**.

Stay **hydrated**.

More meals—but **smaller**.

 This guide contains useful tips, suggestions, and general advice intended to aid you. Always follow the advice given by your doctor or dietitian. Please also seek medical consultation if any problems arise.

WHAT YOU SHOULD EAT

This section will highlight the importance of certain foods and provide general tips and suggestions to help you decide which foods to eat.

YOUR NUTRITION

Protein

It's important to eat protein to help you maintain your body weight, rebuild tissue, and avoid infections.

Good sources of protein include:

- Fish
- Poultry
- Lean meat
- Eggs
- Nuts and nut butters
- Beans
- Peas and lentils
- Dairy products



Carbohydrates and fats

Carbohydrates and fats supply your body with the bulk of the calories it needs. It's important that you consume more calories than usual in order to maintain a healthy body weight and to keep your strength and energy up.

Good sources of carbohydrates include:

- Fruits
- Vegetables
- Bread
- Whole grains
- Beans
- Peas and lentils

Good sources of fats include:

- Butter
- Oils
- Dairy products
- Poultry
- Meat



Staying hydrated

Drink plenty of liquids. It's even more important to stay hydrated on days when you cannot eat. Liquids can provide much-needed calories and keep you from getting dehydrated. Eating foods high in water content, such as soups, fruits, and milk, is also an easy way to stay hydrated.



8 to 12 cups

Most adults need to drink 8 to 12 cups of liquid a day, but your doctor or dietitian can give you specific guidelines on how much is right for you.

Try to avoid drinks that may make some symptoms, such as diarrhea, worse. These include drinks that are alcoholic, high in sugar or caffeine, or very hot or cold.



Vitamin supplements

Talk to your doctor or dietitian before taking any vitamin supplements since they can interact with some medications and treatments. Ideally, food should be your main source of nutrients.



Sugar consumption

Although getting enough carbohydrates in your diet is important, it's generally best to limit the amount of foods with added sugars and sweets that you eat or drink. These types of food often provide you with little nutritional benefit and often take the place of food that's better for you. Some examples of sugary foods to avoid are cakes, candy, pies, and cookies.

Limiting the amount of sugar you eat will also help prevent **dumping syndrome**, which will be discussed in more detail in the *Overcoming barriers & adjusting to change* section on page 9.



HOW YOU SHOULD EAT

This section will provide you with some general guidance on how to best adapt your daily eating schedule and structure.

Adapting your diet

Now that we've discussed the importance of eating certain foods, it's important to make sure to include them in your diet. The easiest way to adapt your diet is to add ingredients to meals you're already familiar with making, or to simply substitute some of the ingredients for more nutritious options. Please refer to page 3 of the previous section, *What you should eat*, to see the types of ingredients you should be including in your meals.

Here are some ways of adding more protein to your diet:

- Add extra meat, poultry, fish, cheese, or beans to your meals
- Add nuts, seeds, or beans to your salads, vegetable dishes, or pasta
- Add nut butters to toast and fruits
- Incorporate eggs into your meals by adding chopped hard-boiled eggs to salads or beating eggs into pureed vegetables while cooking
- Try a commercially available protein supplement



Here are some ways of adding more carbohydrates and fats to your diet:

- Choose baked, broiled, or grilled foods as these typically contain healthy fats
- Use olive oil in your cooking
- Swap out ingredients for whole grain options, such as whole grain pastas or whole wheat breads
- Drink whole milk instead of a low-fat option

Foods that are easier on the stomach

As mentioned, nutrition is an important part of your daily routine. However, there may be times when eating enough will be challenging. The foods listed below are typically easier on the stomach.

Soups

- Clear broths, such as chicken or vegetable
- Strained or pureed soups
- Avoid soups that may cause gas, such as those made with cabbage or broccoli

Drinks

- Water
- Clear carbonated drinks that have lost their fizz
- Sports drinks
- Juices, such as grape, cranberry or vegetable

Meals and snacks

- Avocado
- Tender cuts of beef
- Chicken or turkey that's been broiled and prepared without skin
- Poached or broiled fish
- Noodles or plain pasta
- Creamy peanut butter or other nut butters
- Baked or broiled potatoes without skin
- Saltine crackers
- Pretzels
- White rice



Desserts

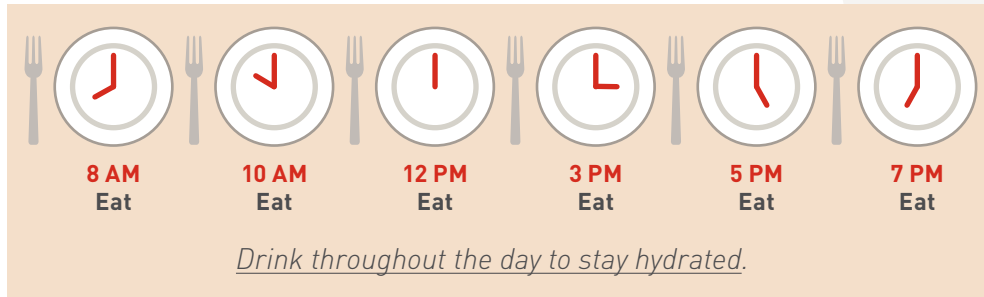
- Bananas
- Popsicles
- Canned fruits, such as peaches, pears or apple sauce
- Gelatin
- Pudding
- Angel food cake

Suggested daily meal structure

Consider eating small, frequent meals throughout the day. It will be difficult to get the nutrition you need if you focus on only 3 meals per day. Eating frequent small meals will help ensure that you're getting enough nutrition. Smaller meals may also help manage symptoms like nausea.

It is recommended that you eat 5–6 small meals per day, roughly 2–3 hours apart.

Here's an example of how your new daily meal structure might look:



Daily food and drink tracker

Consider tracking your daily food and drink intake with a tracker. See the example below. Logging your food will help you understand which foods and portions are easiest for you to eat as well as determine the times that are right for you. Blank copies of this tracker are available on page 13 of this guide.

Date:	Time	Food/Beverage	Portion Size	Comments
10/28				<i>Use this section to write down any symptoms or problems after eating or drinking</i>
Meal #1	7:15 a.m.	Vegetable juice	4 oz	Not very hungry
Meal #2	9:15 a.m.	Plain whole wheat toast, banana, water	1 slice 3 oz banana 6 oz water	None
Meal #3	11:30 a.m.	Hardboiled egg, water	1 egg 6 oz water	None
Meal #4	2:45 p.m.	Apple, water	1 small 6 oz water	None
Meal #5	5:45 p.m.	Chicken soup	8 oz	Very full, unable to finish
Meal #6	7:30 p.m.	Milk	4 oz	None

Portion sizes

Your appetite may not be as reliable as it used to be, and your stomach may not be able to handle regular portions of food. If you're not sure about how much food your stomach can handle, start with a very small portion and slowly increase the size.

As mentioned earlier, it is recommended that you eat small, frequent meals throughout the day as smaller portions will be easier on your stomach.

Using the tracker on page 13 will also help you determine how much food you are able to handle. To measure foods, you can use measuring spoons or cups or a food scale. You can also estimate portion sizes. For example:

- A deck of cards is about 3 ounces of meat
- A baseball is about 1 cup of cut up fruit or vegetable
- A domino is about 1 ounce of cheese

Food safety

It's best to practice good food safety in order to avoid any food-borne illnesses. Here are some general tips to follow when practicing good food safety:

Keep everything clean

- Wash hands often and thoroughly, especially before and after handling food. Pay special attention to fingernails and the backs of hands
- Keep raw and cooked foods separate. Do not reuse any utensils, plates, cutting boards, etc. that have touched raw meat or eggs until after you have cleaned them well with warm, soapy water
- Use separate cutting boards for meats and fruits and vegetables

Cook food thoroughly

- Avoid raw or undercooked meat and seafood
- Cook all eggs until the yolk and egg white are firm

Store food safely

- Always refrigerate foods within 2 hours of purchasing or cooking
- Label food with an expiration date if not already present
- Discard leftovers or open packages. If in doubt, throw it out to be safe

Take care when eating out or buying groceries

- Check food labels to make sure you don't buy anything past its expiration date
- Separate raw meat, poultry, or seafood from other foods while placing in the shopping cart
- Avoid buying food from unsafe and unclean conditions
- At restaurants, ask for meat to be cooked well done

Wash fruits and vegetables

- Before peeling or cutting, rinse produce under running water
- Rub produce gently under running water to remove any dirt
- Scrub firm produce, such as melons, with a produce brush
- Dry produce with a clean cloth or paper towel

Avoid foods associated with food-borne illnesses

- Raw or undercooked meats
- Unpasteurized milk or juices
- Cheeses made from unpasteurized milk
- Foods from a deli counter
- Refrigerated meat spreads or pâtés
- Smoked or precooked seafood
- Sprouts, such as bean, alfalfa, or any other sprout
- Unwashed fruits and vegetables
- Premade salad dressings, eggnog, cookie dough, etc. sold in the refrigerated section of the grocery store

OVERCOMING BARRIERS & ADJUSTING TO CHANGE

This section will discuss potential barriers you may face and what you can do to overcome them.

Common symptoms and tips to overcome them

Acid reflux / Heartburn

Acid reflux or heartburn occurs after eating. You may feel a slight burning discomfort that spreads upwards from the stomach. Suggestions for managing acid reflux or heartburn include:

- Limiting your caffeine intake
- Sitting upright for at least 30 minutes after eating
- Reducing the amount of fatty or fried foods in your diet
- Reducing how much alcohol you drink

Appetite loss

Changes in your eating habits and a loss of appetite may occur as a result of your treatment or as a general symptom. Suggestions for managing appetite loss include:

- Eating more frequently. Try 5–6 smaller meals rather than 3 large meals
- Keeping high-protein and high-calorie snacks nearby for when you do feel hungry
- Avoiding drinking while eating, or limit it to small sips so that you don't end up feeling full too early



Constipation

Medication, changes in eating habits, and decreased physical activity may cause constipation. Tips for managing constipation include:

- Establishing a regular eating schedule
- Increasing your level of physical activity
- Drinking plenty of fluids
- Eating more high-fiber foods
 - Examples of high-fiber foods include whole grain breads, raw fruits and vegetables, seeds, and beans

Diarrhea / Loose stools

Your bowels may move more frequently and cause you to have diarrhea or loose stools. Avoid high fiber foods, as they can make the problem worse. Tips for managing constipation include:

- Avoiding greasy, fried, spicy, or other high-fat foods
- Avoiding foods that cause gas and fizzy drinks
- Drinking plenty of fluids throughout the day to prevent dehydration

Fatigue

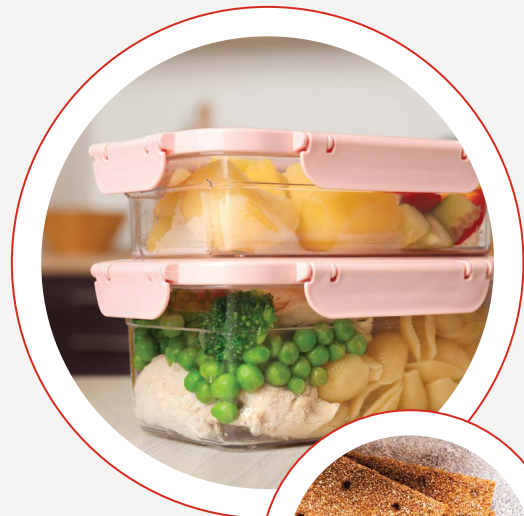
Fatigue is a common side effect that you may experience, and it often occurs because your body requires more energy. If you experience fatigue, some changes to your diet may help. You may also consider the following:

- Cooking food ahead of time and store it for when you feel tired
- Cooking in the morning, when you are less likely to be tired
- Keeping snacks such as dried fruit or crackers nearby for when you need them
- Having foods around that are soft and require less energy to eat, such as soups, stews, or smoothies, can also help make things easier

Nausea

You may feel nauseous, and this can sometimes be accompanied by vomiting. If you experience nausea, suggestions include:

- Eating foods that are easy on the stomach, such as white toast, plain or vanilla yogurt, or clear broth
- Eating smaller meals can also help, as large meals can be hard on the stomach
- Trying not to skip meals or snacks since an empty stomach can make the nausea worse
- Drinking plenty of fluids throughout the day to prevent dehydration



Sore throat / Difficulty swallowing

You may have a sore throat or difficulty swallowing food due to your treatment. Tips for sore throat or difficulty swallowing include:

- Eating soft foods since these will be easier to chew and swallow
- Making sure to cook foods until they are soft and tender
- Cutting foods into small pieces when eating
- Avoiding foods that are spicy or acidic

Vomiting

Vomiting may sometimes follow nausea. Ways to manage food with vomiting include:

- Avoiding drinking or eating anything until your vomiting has stopped
 - Once vomiting has stopped, drink small amounts of clear liquids, such as water or broth
- Adding back solid foods slowly, after you start feeling better
- Drinking plenty of fluids throughout the day to prevent dehydration

Dumping syndrome

Dumping syndrome is a condition that may occur when food leaves your stomach too quickly, before it is fully digested. Dumping syndrome occurs more in people who have had a gastrectomy. You can have either early or late dumping syndrome, and both can be managed by changes to your diet.



30 minutes

Early dumping syndrome

Early dumping syndrome is caused by a shift of fluids in the small intestine. Symptoms of early dumping syndrome usually start right away or within 30 minutes after eating. These symptoms may include:

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Abdominal pain
- Diarrhea
- Flushing
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Rapid heart rate



1–3 hours

Late dumping syndrome

Late dumping syndrome is caused by a drop in blood sugar levels. Symptoms of late dumping syndrome usually start within 1–3 hours after eating. These symptoms may include:

- Sweating
- Dizziness or lightheadedness
- Trouble concentrating
- Fatigue
- Rapid heart rate

Tips to minimize dumping syndrome

Here are some tips to help prevent or reduce dumping syndrome from occurring:

- Eat small meals 5–6 times a day
- Eat protein with every meal
- Choose low-fiber grains
- Avoid eating a lot of sugar
- Limit carbohydrates
- Lie down for 30 minutes after eating

Changes after surgery or gastrectomy

Surgery may slow your digestion or reduce how much food your stomach can hold. This can be a challenge since having surgery also increases your body's need for good nutrition. After surgery, you may struggle with getting back to normal eating. If this happens, your doctor might recommend enteral nutritional support to ensure that your body is getting all the nutrition it needs.

A gastrectomy is a more specific type of surgery. After a gastrectomy, your stomach will hold much less food, so eating smaller and more frequent meals is even more important. Dumping Syndrome, when food passes through your stomach too quickly, is a common problem that people face after a gastrectomy.

General eating advice to follow after a surgery or gastrectomy:

- Eat small meals 5–6 times a day
- Chew food very well to help with digestion
- Eat slowly so you don't overeat and then feel uncomfortable
- Sit upright during meals
- Don't drink more than a ½ cup of liquid with meals
- Eat protein with each meal
- Avoid peppery, spicy, fatty, and sugary foods as they can cause discomfort
- Avoid dairy products as a gastrectomy may cause lactose intolerance

Appointment tracker

Use this tracker to help you remember your initial appointments and follow-ups with your gastroenterologist and dietitian.

Initial meeting
with gastroenterologist: _____/_____/_____

Follow-up: _____/_____/_____

Follow-up: _____/_____/_____

Follow-up: _____/_____/_____

Initial meeting
with dietitian: _____/_____/_____

Follow-up: _____/_____/_____

Follow-up: _____/_____/_____

Follow-up: _____/_____/_____

Your guide to wellness

We hope that this guide on nutrition and wellness was useful to you. Please remember the tips and advice given within this guide when you're out grocery shopping or planning meals. Remember, good nutrition is important to your treatment and your health.

If anything, please remember the key takeaways from this guide:

- Eat a **balanced diet**.
- Stay **hydrated**.
- More** meals—but **smaller**.

Daily food and drink tracker

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Eat a **balanced diet**.
Stay **hydrated**.
More meals—but **smaller**.

The Lilly logo is written in a red, cursive script font.

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