

Eating Well During Cancer



Strength to Fight
Get Back to Life

This is a public education initiative by:



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Introduction

Chances are, if you are reading this booklet, either you or someone you know is about to get, or is now getting cancer treatment. ***Eating Well During Cancer*** is specially written to help you, your family or friend to cope with eating problems which may occur because of the cancer itself and the treatment that has been prescribed.

Good nutrition during cancer treatment can help patients to:

- ▶ Feel better
- ▶ Keep up their strength and energy
- ▶ Maintain weight and the body's store of nutrients
- ▶ Better tolerate treatment-related side effects
- ▶ Lower the risk of infection
- ▶ Heal and recover faster

Nutrient needs of people with cancer vary among individuals. You are encouraged to talk to your doctor, dietitian or nurse to understand your specific nutritional requirements and plan ways to meet them. If you have questions regarding any points in this guide, you can also ask your healthcare professional to help provide a more detailed explanation.

Cancer treatment

What you should know and what you can do

When you are healthy, eating enough food to get the nutrients and calories you need is not usually a problem. But when you are being treated for cancer, this is hard to achieve, especially if you have side effects or just don't feel well. So, you might need to change your diet to help build up your strength and withstand the effects of your cancer and its treatment.

Conventional treatment for cancer includes surgery, radiation therapy, chemotherapy or a combination of treatments.

1. Surgery

Surgery is done to remove cancer cells and nearby tissue. Whether surgery is recommended or not depends on the type of cancer, its location, and if it has spread to other parts of the body. Surgery is often used with radiation and/or chemotherapy. After surgery, the body needs extra calories and protein for wound healing and recovery.

2. Radiation therapy

In radiation therapy, radiation is directed at the tumour to kill the cancer cells. While all cells are affected by radiation, most normal cells can usually recover over time. The type of side effects radiation causes depends on the area of the body being treated, the size of the area being treated, the type and total dose of radiation, and the number of treatments.

3. Chemotherapy

Chemotherapy is the use of strong drugs to kill cancer cells. The drugs are most often taken by mouth or injected into the bloodstream. Chemotherapy drugs can damage both healthy and cancer cells. Cells most likely to be injured are bone marrow, hair and the lining of the digestive tract, including the mouth, esophagus, stomach, and intestines.

Cancer treatment, particularly chemotherapy and radiation therapy, can cause side effects that lead to eating problems. Typical eating problems are listed below; some of these are unique to one form of treatment while others are common to more than one. See the next section to learn about ways to manage them.

- ▶ Appetite loss
- ▶ Changes in sense of taste or smell
- ▶ Constipation
- ▶ Diarrhoea
- ▶ Dry mouth

- ▶ Nausea
- ▶ Sore mouth/throat
- ▶ Bloating
- ▶ Weight loss

You might or might not have any of these side effects. Many factors determine whether you will have any side effects and how bad they will be. These factors include the type of cancer you have, the part of the body affected, the type and length of your treatment, and the dose of the treatment.

Many side effects can be controlled, and most go away over time after the treatment ends. Talk to your doctor or nurse about your chances of having side effects and what can be done to help control them. After your treatment starts, tell your cancer care team about any side effects that are not being controlled. Inform them if the medicines given to you are ineffective to control side effects, so that others may be considered.



Before treatment begins

Until you begin treatment, you won't know exactly what side effects you may have or how you will feel. One way to prepare is to look at your treatment as a time to focus on yourself and on getting well. Here are some other ways to get ready:

- 1.** Reduce your anxiety about treatment and side effects by taking action now. Talk to your treatment team about the things that worry you. Learn as much as you can about the cancer and your treatment plan. Knowing how you might cope with possible side effects can make you feel more in control.
- 2.** Stock your pantry and freezer with your favourite foods so that you won't need to shop as often. Include foods you know you can eat even when you are sick.
- 3.** Cook in advance, and freeze foods in meal-size portions.
- 4.** Talk to your family or friends about ways they can help with shopping and cooking, or ask one of them to take over those jobs for you.

Once treatment starts

During cancer treatment, your body often needs more calories and protein to help maintain your weight, keep up your strength and rebuild your tissues. People who eat well are better able to cope with side effects of treatment, and may even be able to handle higher doses of certain drugs.

You will probably have good days and bad days when it comes to food while undergoing treatment. Don't be too hard on yourself if side effects make it hard to eat! Here are some tips to help you manage:

- 1.** Eat your largest meal when you have the biggest appetite.
- 2.** Eat your favourite food at any time of the day.
- 3.** Consume most of your fluids between meals, instead of with meals.
- 4.** Drink oral nutritional supplements for extra calories and protein.



Some cancer treatments can also make you more likely to get infections. Thus, it is important for you to take special care in the way you handle and prepare food:

- ▶ Do not use foods or drinks that are past their expiry date
- ▶ Keep hot foods hot and cold foods cold
- ▶ Wash your hands, knives and counter tops before and after preparing food
- ▶ Use one cutting board for meat and one for fruits and vegetables
- ▶ Thaw meat, chicken and fish in the refrigerator or defrost them in the microwave
- ▶ Cook meat, chicken and eggs thoroughly
- ▶ Avoid eating raw fish or shellfish

Don't forget about physical activity as well – it can help you to:

- ▶ Maintain muscle mass, strength, stamina and bone strength
- ▶ Reduce depression, stress, fatigue, nausea and constipation
- ▶ Improve appetite

Talk to your doctor about aiming for at least 150 minutes of moderate-intensity activity, like brisk walking, each week. If your doctor approves, start small (maybe 5 or 10 minutes a day) and as you are able, work towards the goal of 150 minutes. Listen to your body and rest when you need to. Now is not the time to push yourself to exercise – do what you can when you are up to it.

Safety considerations

Inform your doctor if you intend to use, or have already started on supplement pills, herbal products or any special diet. Ask your doctor or dietitian for reliable information on such “therapies”. They can discuss with you about the research that has been done, and whether or not the product or diet is safe or would interfere with your treatment. To avoid problems, be sure to follow their advice.

Coping with your feelings during cancer treatment

Feeling depressed, anxious, afraid, angry, helpless or lonely could affect your interest in food, shopping, and cooking. Fatigue can also make it harder to cope. One way to help deal with this is to join a cancer support group. In support group meetings, you can talk about your feelings and listen to other people talk about theirs. You can also learn how others cope with cancer, treatment side effects, and eating problems. Contact the Singapore Cancer Society (SCS) at 6499 9132 or email supportgroup@singaporecancersociety.org.sg to find out more about support group meetings.



Eating problems

Helpful tips to manage treatment side effects

1 Appetite loss

- ▶ Eat five or six small meals instead of three large meals.
- ▶ Keep snacks handy to eat – some ideas include pau, bun, sandwich, biscuits, chocolate bar, banana and raisins. Try to have a bedtime snack, as it will provide extra calories but won't affect your appetite for the next meal.
- ▶ Sip only small amounts of liquids during meals.
- ▶ When it is hard to eat, drink oral nutritional supplements – they are easy to consume and highly nutritious.
- ▶ Make the meal more enjoyable with flowers and nice dishes. Play music or watch your favourite television show. Eat with family or friends.

2 Bloating

- ▶ Eat small frequent meals throughout the day. Drink your beverages between meals, rather than during meals.
- ▶ Avoid overeating and chew food thoroughly before swallowing.
- ▶ Avoid fried or greasy foods – fat stays in the stomach longer and makes you feel full.
- ▶ It may be necessary to limit some foods and beverages which tend to cause gas formation. Examples include soft drinks, lactose-containing dairy products, certain vegetables and fruits (e.g. cabbage, cauliflower and apple), beans and lentils.
- ▶ Mild exercises after meals (e.g. walking) may help relieve stomach distention.

3 Changes in sense of taste or smell

- ▶ Serve foods cold or at room temperature. This can decrease the food's tastes and smells, making them easier to tolerate.
- ▶ Season foods with tart flavours (lemon, other citrus fruit, vinegar) or sweet flavours (sugar, honey, syrup) depending on the taste problem.
- ▶ Adjust the amount of seasonings and spices used in cooking until you obtain the taste you desire.
- ▶ Chew lemon drops, mint, sour plums or preserved orange peels to remove undesirable lingering taste after eating.
- ▶ Rinse your mouth and brush your teeth frequently to help clear your taste buds and eliminate bad taste.
- ▶ Eat with plastic or porcelain cutlery if you have a metallic or bitter taste in your mouth.

4 Constipation

- ▶ Try to stick to regular routines: eat at the same times each day, and try to be regular with bowel movements.
- ▶ Consume fibre-rich foods in such as wholegrain products, vegetables, fruits, beans and lentils.
- ▶ Drink at least 8 to 10 cups of fluids daily. These can include water, milk, juices, soups and other beverages (cut down on caffeinated drinks e.g. coffee and cola as they tend to dehydrate the body).
- ▶ Light exercises such as walking may sometimes help stimulate bowel movements.
- ▶ Use laxatives only with your doctor's advice. Check with your doctor if you haven't had a bowel movement for three days or more.

5 Diarrhoea

- ▶ Drink plenty of mild, clear liquids throughout the day to prevent dehydration. Drink them at room temperature.
- ▶ Eat small, frequent meals and snacks during the day.
- ▶ Avoid high-fibre, high-fat (greasy/fried), spicy or very sweet foods. Avoid eating raw fruit and vegetables with skin or seeds, and avoid dried fruits. When diarrhoea is over, gradually eat foods with more fibre.
- ▶ Change to lactose-free dairy products or nutritional supplements.
- ▶ Limit sugar-free gum and candies with sorbitol.
- ▶ Inform your doctor if diarrhoea persists or increases, or if your stools have an unusual colour or odour.

6 Dry mouth

- ▶ Sip fluids throughout the day. This can help moisten your mouth, which can help you swallow and talk.
- ▶ Eat foods that are easy to swallow such as porridge, mashed potatoes and soupy noodles, as well as steamed or stewed dishes.
- ▶ Moisten food with sauces, gravy, or soups. Dip dry foods into beverages before eating them.
- ▶ Do not drink beer, wine, or any type of alcohol. These can make your mouth even drier.
- ▶ Rinse your mouth and suck on ice-cubes to relieve mouth dryness. Avoid mouthwash containing alcohol as they will further dry your mouth.
- ▶ Consult your doctor – he or she may prescribe an oral lubricant to relieve the discomfort.

7 Nausea

- ▶ Eat five or six small meals each day instead of three large meals.
- ▶ Do not skip meals and snacks. Even if you do not feel hungry, you should still eat. For many people, having an empty stomach makes nausea worse.
- ▶ Choose foods that don't have a strong odour and are not overly sweet, spicy or greasy. Have foods and drinks that are not too hot and not too cold.
- ▶ Eat dry toast or crackers before getting out of bed if you have nausea in the morning.
- ▶ Sip clear fluids like barley water, ginger tea and clear soups between meals.
- ▶ Small amount of salty or sour foods (e.g. sour plum) may help reduce nausea.
- ▶ Ask your doctor to prescribe anti-nausea or anti-vomiting medication.

8 Sore mouth/throat

- ▶ Avoid tart, acidic or salty beverages and foods.
- ▶ Avoid rough-textured foods such as dry toast, crackers, granola and raw fruits and vegetables.
- ▶ Choose cool or lukewarm foods.
- ▶ Avoid alcohol, caffeine, carbonated beverages and tobacco.
- ▶ Skip irritating spices such as chilli powder, cloves, curry, hot sauces, nutmeg and pepper; season with herbs instead.
- ▶ Choose foods that are easy to chew such as porridge, scrambled eggs, steamed fish, ice cream and custard.
- ▶ Cut foods into small pieces, and cook them until they are soft and tender.
- ▶ Drink with a straw. Use a very small spoon (e.g. teaspoon) to help you take smaller bites.

9 Weight loss

- ▶ Have small, frequent meals throughout the day. Eat when it's time to eat, rather than waiting until you're hungry.
- ▶ Enrich the foods you eat and make every mouthful count. For example:
 - Add minced meat, fish, egg or tofu/taukwa to porridge.
 - Spread margarine, peanut butter or kaya on crackers.
 - Add condensed milk, sugar or raisins into oatmeal.
 - Eat buns with fillings (e.g. tuna, cream, cheese) instead of plain buns.
 - Drink milk or soybean milk instead of plain water or chinese tea.
- ▶ Use oral nutritional supplements to help boost your calorie and nutrient intake.
- ▶ Consult your doctor if weight loss persists.



Special Note on Weight Loss

Weight loss can be an early sign of an undiagnosed cancer for some people. For others, weight loss occurs only as the cancer and its treatment advance. Without proper intervention, this can progress to a condition called cancer cachexia, which is characterised by ongoing muscle wasting, with or without the loss of body fat. Cancer cachexia is associated with poor outcomes for cancer patients, including reduced response to therapy, more complications and infections, lower quality of life, and reduced survival.

Unintended weight loss in cancer patients is different from other types of weight loss as it is mainly due to metabolic changes caused by the tumour, and may not be reversed simply by increasing calorie intake. Therapy for weight loss in cancer patients therefore needs to address the underlying metabolic abnormalities in order to be effective, and should begin as early as possible.

Eicosapentaenoic acid (EPA), an omega-3 fatty acid, is able to decrease the metabolic changes and proinflammatory response that are associated with cancer-induced weight loss.

Consumption of an oral nutrition supplement containing EPA has been shown to result in improved outcomes such as weight gain, maintenance of lean body mass, reduced treatment interruptions and improved quality of life. Talk to your doctor or dietitian to find out more.





Diet after cancer treatment

When cancer treatment is completed, many of your eating problems will get better. But some eating problems, such as changes in taste or smell, might last longer than your course of treatment. If you had treatment for head and neck cancer or surgery to remove part of your stomach or intestines, then eating problems may always be part of your life.

In general, you should return to eating a balanced and varied diet after cancer treatment. Healthy eating, a physically active lifestyle and healthy weight management may have an impact on the risk of cancer recurrence.



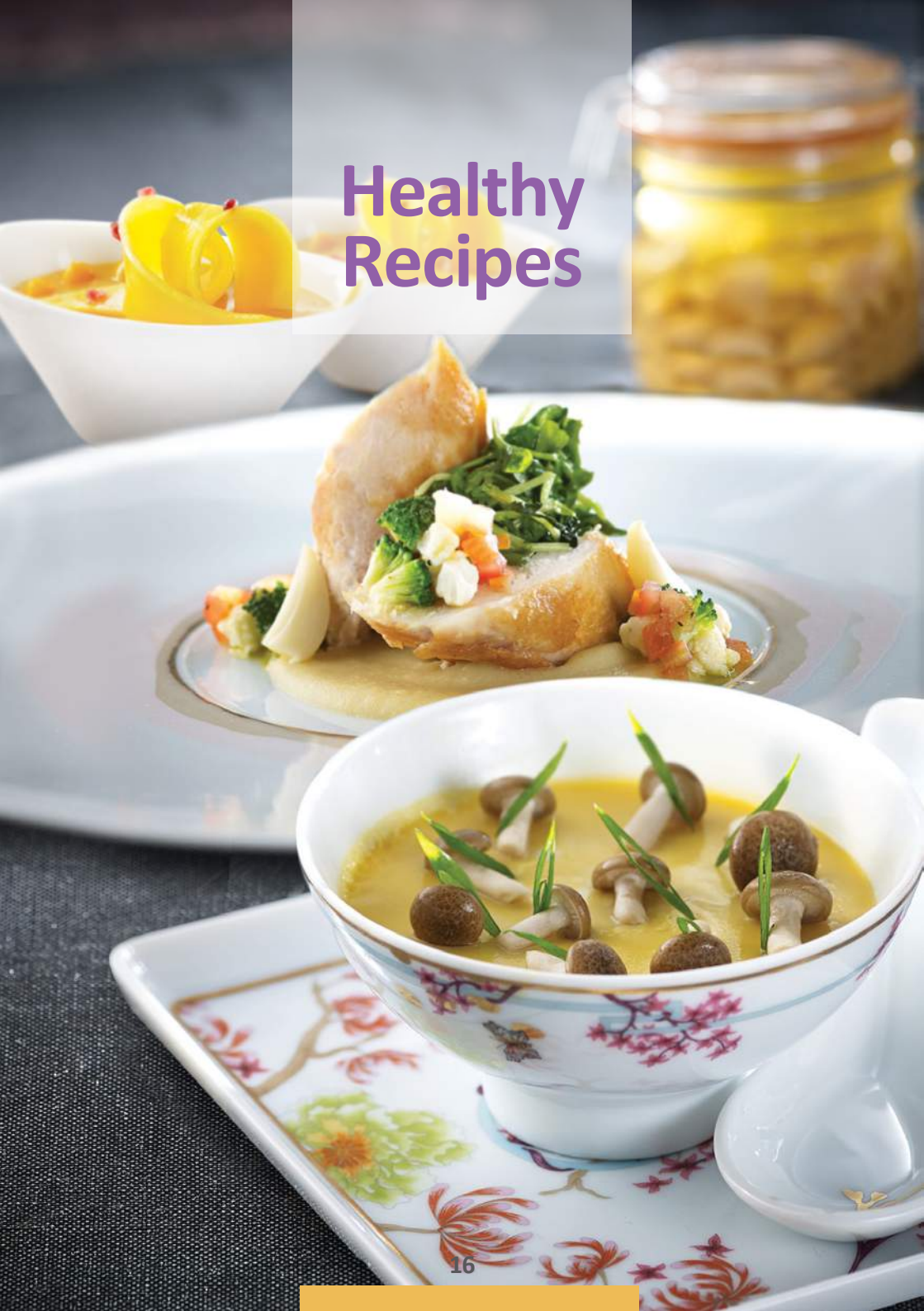
Source: Health Promotion Board

As a guide, refer to “My Healthy Plate”, a friendly visual tool designed for Singaporeans by the Health Promotion Board (HPB). “My Healthy Plate” basically encourage individuals to consume more vegetables, fruits and wholegrain foods (e.g. brown rice and wholemeal bread) and include fish, lean meat, bean products (e.g. tofu) and dairy products (e.g. low fat milk) in the diet. Individuals should also choose water over sweetened drinks to help in weight management, make use of healthier oils (e.g. canola, soy, sunflower and peanut oils) in moderate amounts, and engage in regular physical activity.

For more information, visit the HPB website at www.hpb.gov.sg

You may also find it helpful to talk to a dietitian, even when your cancer treatment has ended. A dietitian can provide personalised advice on healthy eating and discuss ways to manage any lasting eating problems that you might have.

Healthy Recipes





Chicken and Corn Soup

Serves : 2

Ingredients :

500ml	Chicken stock Salt and pepper to taste
1/2 cup	Cream of corn
1	Chicken breast, steamed, shredded
1	Egg
2 tbsp	Corn starch
	Spring onions and bread croutons (optional)

Method :

1. In a large pot, add 500 ml stock and salt to taste. Bring to a boil.
2. Add the creamed corn, stir well. Add the shredded chicken. Boil again.
3. In a small bowl, beat egg and, slowly drizzle into the soup, stirring all the while.
4. In another small bowl, mix corn starch with the rest of the stock to make a thick paste.
5. Slowly stir in the starch paste into the boiling stock, stirring till the soup thickens.
6. Season with pepper.
7. Serve immediately, garnished with spring onions and toasted croutons.

Tips :

1. Replace chicken stock with stock of choice.
2. Season to preference.

Approximate Nutritional Information (per serving)	
Calories (kcal)	268 kcal
Protein (g)	23 g



Cold Silken Tofu with Vine Tomatoes & Orange Honey Dressing

Serves : 2

Ingredients A :

200g	Silken tofu (Pasturized tofu sealed in box, from supermarkets*)
80g	Vine tomato

**Alternative method of preparation, steam tofu for 10 minutes, leave it to cool and add the dressing.*

Ingredients B :

(Orange Honey Dressing)

50g	ProSure® (powder, orange flavour)
100g	Tofu
50g	Fresh orange juice
5g	Orange zest
15g	Manuka honey

Method :

1. To prepare Orange Honey Dressing, Place all ingredients B in a large mixing bowl and blend well. Keep chilled till ready to use.
2. Cut tofu into half, lengthwise.
3. Cut vine tomato into wedges. Place tofu and tomatoes on a deep dish plate.
4. Drizzle Dressing and serve.

Tips :

1. This sauce is versatile, drizzle over roasted meat or steamed fish.
2. Set in small pudding dishes for a light snack.

Approximate Nutritional Information (per serving)	
Calories (kcal)	241 kcal
Protein (g)	17 g
EPA (an omega-3 fatty acid) from Prosure® (g)	0.37 g

ENERGY DENSE, HIGH PROTEIN NUTRITION with EPA*

ProSure



ProSure® is scientifically formulated for people with cancer-induced weight loss.



Steamed Egg with Honshimeiji Mushrooms & Spring Onion

Serves : 2

Ingredients :

110g	Egg
25g	Honshimeiji mushrooms
2g	Spring onion
270ml	ProSure® (liquid, vanilla flavour)
	A pinch of sea salt

Preparation :

1. Thinly slice spring onion.

Method :

1. In a large bowl, beat eggs, ProSure® and salt together.
2. Pour into desire mould or bowls. Cover with cling wrap and steam for 15 minutes.
3. Blanch mushrooms and arrange them on top of the steamed egg. Garnish with spring onion and serve.

Tips :

1. Skip the salt & steam ProSure® and egg to make a sweet custard.
2. Garnish with fruit of choice and eat as a light snack or dessert.

Approximate Nutritional Information (per serving)	
Calories (kcal)	248 kcal
Protein (g)	16 g
EPA (an omega-3 fatty acid) from Prosure® (g)	0.61 g

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Asian Chicken Stew

Serves : 2

Ingredients :

2 tbsp	Olive oil
1	Onion, peeled, sliced thinly
1	Green chili, deseeded, sliced
1/2 tsp	Ginger paste
1/2 tsp	Garlic paste
1/2 inch	Piece cinnamon (optional)
2	Cardamom pods (optional)
2	Chicken drumsticks with thigh, washed, drained, skin removed, cut into 4 pieces
1/4 tsp	Black pepper powder (optional)
	Salt to taste
1 cup	Water
1	Potato, peeled, cubed
1/2	Carrot, peeled, cubed
1/2 cup	Coconut milk

Approximate Nutritional Information (per serving)

Calories (kcal)	494 kcal
Protein (g)	25 g

Method :

1. In a saucepan, heat oil and fry onion slices until tender but not brown.
2. Add green chili, ginger and garlic and continue to fry for 2 minutes until fragrant. Add spices.
3. Add chicken and fry for another 2 – 3 minutes. Add salt and pepper to season.
4. Add water, potatoes and carrot. Cover and cook until meat and vegetables are tender.
5. Lower flame, add coconut milk and stir well.
6. Remove from the stove and serve with bread or rice.

Tips :

1. If preferred, replace chicken with fish or any other meat or just vegetables.
2. To reduce fat, coconut milk can be replaced with low fat milk.
3. Control use of spices, chili and pepper to suit personal taste preference.



Chicken Breast with Boiled Garlic and ProSure® Potato Mash

Serves : 2

Ingredients :

2	Fresh chicken breasts
20g	Broccoli
20g	Cauliflower
30g	Tomato
60g	Pea sprouts
110ml	ProSure® (liquid, vanilla flavour)
10g	Garlic
1 tsp	Olive oil
4g	Sea salt
1/2 tsp	Pepper crush
100g	Potato

Preparation :

1. Cut broccoli and cauliflower into small florets.
2. Remove seeds from tomatoes and dice them.
3. Cut garlic into quarters. Poach them in ProSure® for 15 minutes till soft. Set aside the garlic and keep the milk. Peel and dice potatoes.

Approximate Nutritional Information (per serving)	
Calories (kcal)	355 kcal
Protein (g)	34 g
EPA (an omega-3 fatty acid) from Prosure® (g)	0.26 g

Method :

1. Season chicken breast with a little sea salt and pepper, and pan-fry over medium heat with a little olive oil. Set aside.
2. Blanch broccoli and cauliflower florets in boiling water and cool in ice water. Combine with 5ml of olive oil and diced tomatoes to form the salsa.
3. Sauté pea sprouts with a little olive oil, salt and pepper.
4. Boil potatoes and mash. Add ProSure® to the mixture.
5. To assemble, place ProSure® potato mash on the centre of the plate.
6. Arrange chicken breast on the mash and garnish with pea sprouts, garlic and the prepared salsa.

Tips :

1. ProSure® with mashed potatoes can be served with roast meat and vegetables as well.



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Grilled Fish Crusted with Asian Herbs

Serves : 2

Ingredients :

1/2 cup	Coarse bread crumbs
1/8 tsp	Coarse sea salt
1/8 tsp	Mixed whole pepper corns, crushed
2 tbsp	Coriander leaves, finely chopped
1/2 tsp	Lemon zest
180g	Salmon fillet, cut into 2 pieces
2 tbsp	Mustard paste
2 tbsp	Olive oil
2 pcs	Lemon wedges

Method :

1. In a small bowl, mix together bread crumbs, salt, pepper, coriander leaves, lemon zest and set aside.
2. Wash and pat dry the salmon fillets. Season with salt and pepper.
3. Place skin side down and, smear mustard on the top surface.
4. Coat the top with the seasoned bread crumbs.
5. Heat a small saucepan with oil, and place the salmon fillets skin side down and cook without turning for 2 – 3 minutes until the skin is browned.
6. Place the fillets in a pre-heated oven at 180°C and cook for 8 – 10 minutes.
7. Serve immediately with rice, bread or potatoes, garnished with a lemon wedge.

Tips :

1. Replace salmon fillets with fish of choice.
2. Control seasonings to preference.
3. Mustard can be replaced by egg white as it will help hold the seasoned bread crumbs to the fish.

Approximate Nutritional Information (per serving)	
Calories (kcal)	434 kcal
Protein (g)	26 g



Mango Pudding

Serves : 4 Ingredients :

120g	Mango flesh
75ml	Evaporated milk
90ml	Water
36g	Sugar
4 pcs	Gelatin sheets
110ml	ProSure® (liquid, vanilla flavour)

Garnish : (Optional)

Some	Fresh mango slices
Some	Fresh mango puree
2 pcs	Dried cranberries

Preparation :

1. Finely chop dried cranberries.

Method :

1. Soak gelatin sheets in ice water to bloom for 15 minutes. Squeeze dry.
2. Bring mango puree, evaporated milk, water, sugar to a boil.
3. Add in gelatin and stir till gelatin dissolves.
4. Cool the mixture to room temperature before adding in ProSure®.
5. Transfer the mixture to a desired porcelain bowl and chill in the fridge till set and firm.
6. Decorate with mango slices, fresh mango puree and chopped cranberries.

Tips :

1. Change the fruit puree to vary the flavours

Approximate Nutritional Information (per serving)	
Calories (kcal)	136 kcal
Protein (g)	6 g
EPA (an omega-3 fatty acid) from Prosure® (g)	0.13 g

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Eggless Chocolate Mousse

Serves : 4

Ingredients :

100g	Bitter sweet chocolate
30g	Sugar
50g	Fresh cream
150ml	ProSure® (liquid, vanilla flavour)
100ml	Whipping fresh cream

Garnish : (Optional)

Some	Fresh mint leaves
Some	Fresh raspberries
Some	Chocolate shavings

Preparation :

1. Chop chocolate.
2. Chill whipping fresh cream.
3. Rinse mint leaves and raspberries with filtered water, drain and set aside.

Approximate Nutritional Information (per serving)	
Calories (kcal)	313 kcal
Protein (g)	5 g
EPA (an omega-3 fatty acid) from Prosure® (g)	0.17 g

Method :

1. Whisk whipping fresh cream to soft peak and keep aside.
2. Meanwhile boil fresh cream and sugar. Stir it into the chopped chocolate slowly to form a liquid paste.
3. Fold in whipped cream, followed by ProSure®. Transfer into decorative glasses. Set in the chiller overnight.
4. Decorate with chocolate shavings, raspberries and mint leaves before serving.

Tips :

1. You can replace chocolate with flavours you prefer such as coffee or green tea.

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Full-of-flavour Fruit Smoothie

Serves : 1

Ingredients :

240ml	ProSure® (liquid, vanilla flavour)
10	Whole strawberries
	Honey (optional)

Method :

1. Pour ProSure® into an ice cube tray and freeze.
2. Clean and freeze strawberries.
3. Blend the frozen ProSure® and strawberries in a blender until the mixture reaches the desired consistency.
4. Sweeten with honey.

Tips :

1. Vary the fruit of choice to blend with ProSure® to create a nutritious smoothie.

Approximate Nutritional Information (per serving)	
Calories (kcal)	343 kcal
Protein (g)	17 g
EPA (an omega-3 fatty acid) from Prosure® (g)	1.10 g



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Keeping track of your diet

Using a Food Diary

Recording everything you eat and drink can be useful in managing your diet, whether it is to help increase your weight or deal with the side effects of treatment. You can find a sample of a food diary on the next page; an example of a completed record is shown below.

Make copies of the blank diary, and use them to record all the foods and drinks that you consume (for at least 3 days). There is also space to note down any supplements that you have taken, as well as any physical activity that you have done. Show the completed records to your doctor or dietitian, and discuss ways to improve your food intake and nutritional status.

TIP!

If you find it hard to eat, consider drinking an oral nutritional supplement which is high in energy, high in protein, low in fat and contains EPA.

Example

Date & Day: 11 March 2015, Wednesday

Time and place	Food/drink	Amount consumed	Other activities while eating?	Who was I with?	How was I feeling?	Was I hungry?
8.00 am, Coffee shop	Kaya toast	1 slice	None	Alone	Anxious	No
	Barley drink	1/2 glass				

Nutritional supplements

Description	Amount consumed	Time Taken
ProSure® liquid	1 packet	4.30 pm

Physical activity

Description	Duration
Stroll in the park	15 minutes

My Food Diary

Date & Day:

Time and place	Food/drink	Amount consumed	Other activities while eating?	Who was I with?	How was I feeling?	Was I hungry?

Nutritional supplements

Description	Amount consumed	Time Taken

Physical activity

Description	Duration

Summary - Nutrition in cancer care

Good nutrition before, during, and after treatment is important.

Try to eat a varied and balanced diet from the four food groups:

Whole grains, Fruits, Vegetables, and Meat & Others.

- ▶ *Include generous portions of brightly-coloured fruit and vegetables.*
- ▶ *Eat moderate amounts of lean meat, beans and low fat milk, yoghurt and cheese.*
- ▶ *Avoid trans fats, processed meats and alcohol.*

Cancer and cancer treatment may affect nutrition.

Try your best to eat.

- ▶ *Be creative - change the texture, temperature and taste of foods - so that you can eat the right types and quantities of foods.*
- ▶ *Get help to purchase and prepare food (see examples of recipes provided).*
- ▶ *If you cannot eat, then drink nutrient-dense beverages.*

Modify your food and beverage choices to address the symptoms you experience.

- ▶ *If you have constipation, increase intake of water, whole-grains, fruit, vegetables and beans.*
- ▶ *If you have diarrhoea, avoid high fat and spicy foods. Reduce fibre intake for the time being. Eat clean and safe food always.*
- ▶ *If you have nausea, eat when you feel better. Have small, frequent meals and snacks.*

It is important to treat weight loss caused by cancer and its treatment.

- ▶ *Weigh yourself regularly. Discuss your weight change with the doctor.*
- ▶ *Include an EPA-containing, protein-rich and low fat oral nutrition supplement in your diet.*
- ▶ *Keep a food diary to keep track of your dietary intake.*
- ▶ *Take action early to prevent any worsening of weight loss.*

Disclaimer

The Singapore Cancer Society does not endorse or promote the use of any product mentioned in this booklet.

The information is presented in a summary to provide understanding and knowledge only. It does not recommend the self-management of health problems or replace consultation with your doctor. You should never disregard medical advice or delay seeking it because of something you have read here.

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