



## Small Meals and Snacks

It can be hard to meet your nutrient needs when receiving cancer treatment. Smaller meals and snacks are often easier to get in. Choose foods that work with any side effects from the treatment you are having. For example, if you have mouth sores, choose soft, bland foods like scrambled eggs and yogurt.

### Tips for Eating Small Meals and Snacks

- Eat what you like.
  - Breakfast for dinner is a great small meal.
  - Eat when you are hungriest.
    - If you are hungriest in the morning, try to make that your largest meal and have smaller meals/snacks for the rest of the day.
    - If you are hungriest in the evening or at night, start the day with smaller meals and eat larger meals later.
    - Keep snacks with you when you travel, in your car or bag. Have something close at hand.
    - Practice food safety techniques – don't consume undercooked meats.
    - Ask your registered dietitian/nutritionist for meal/snack ideas and [smoothie and shake recipes](#)

### How many calories do I need?

Use this formula to calculate how many calories you need per day:

- Divide your weight in pounds (lbs.) by 2.2.
- Multiply this number by 30.
- Example: 150lbs divided by 2.2 = 68.18 x 30 = 2054 daily calories needed.

Then take your total calories and divide by the number of meals/snacks you want to eat. Use this as a guide for the number of calories to have per meal/snack.

- Divide your daily calorie needs by the number of meals/snacks you plan to eat that day.
- Example: 2054 calories divided by 6 meals/snacks = 340 calories per meal/snack.

### What should I eat?

#### Calories

- Choose calorie-dense foods. These are foods that give you the most calories per serving.
- Boost calories by adding gravy and sauces to meals, add cheese to mashed veggies and tofu. Cream-based foods are often higher in calories.

#### Fluids

- You can also use high-calorie fluids as smaller meals/snacks including full-fat chocolate milk, Carnation Essentials® (formerly Carnation instant breakfast), Boost Plus®, Ensure Plus®, milkshakes, smoothies, fruit nectar, juice, commercial eggnog, hot cocoa with cream and whole/fortified milk

#### Protein

- You should have protein as part of every meal and snack.
- Add protein by using smooth nut butters in smoothies, hot cereal with fruit and on bread.
- Try vanilla protein drinks instead of milk in your cereal, pudding, coffee, milkshakes, and smoothies.

## Other Small Meal and Snack Ideas

- Try tuna, egg, chicken, tofu salad or hummus.
- Have a cup of a cream-based soup.
- Eggs (scrambled, hard-boiled) or an omelet with vegetables and cheese.
- Make a mashed potato bowl topped with soft vegetables and ground meats or beans with gravy and cheese.
- Refried beans and black beans (mashed) are soft, delicious and a great source of protein.
- Mix ground chicken or turkey with gravy and mashed potatoes or noodles.
- Baby food (in jars) is a low cost, ready to eat, portable snack.
- Mix mashed bananas and smooth nut butters.
- Try an avocado sliced with hummus or make guacamole.
- Opt for whole milk pudding, yogurt, ice cream, and sherbet.
- Add fruit to hot or cold cereal.
- Try a soft cheese, like ricotta or cottage cheese, with pureed fruit or honey.
- Creamed, soft vegetables are great on top of mashed potatoes or with eggs.
- Enhance your oatmeal, cream of wheat, porridge or grits!
  - Add in smooth nut butter, whey or pea protein.
  - Soak overnight in milk.
  - Top with soft fruits for sweet or roasted veggies for a savory flavor.

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