

How to make nutritious soups

For people with cancer

Eating soup is an easy way to get more nutrition and hydration. It can be a great choice if you have lost weight, have problems eating, or need more protein and calories in your diet.

Heat ¼ cup (60 ml) oil, butter, or ghee in a large pot over medium heat.

Add 2 cups (500 ml) of protein food (choose one or more):

- meat, chopped or ground
- poultry, chopped or ground
- fish or shellfish, fresh or frozen
- tofu or tempeh, cubed
- lentils or split peas, dried
- beans, canned or pre-cooked



Add seasonings (choose one or more):

- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic or shallots, finely chopped
- fresh ginger, finely chopped
- fish sauce, curry paste, soy sauce, tamarind, tamari sauce, miso, soybean paste
- dried herbs like basil, thyme, rosemary, dill, parsley, oregano
- dried spices like cumin, coriander, paprika
- 2 stalks lemon grass



Optional: Add 1 cup (250 ml) of fresh, frozen or canned vegetables for extra fibre.

Stir frequently. Continue cooking until protein food is cooked through.

Add 4 cups (1 L) of liquid (choose one or more):

Lower calorie options:

- broth, stock, dashi, water
- tomato juice, chopped canned tomatoes

Higher calorie options:

- whole 3.25% cow's milk
- soy milk or full-fat coconut milk



Add a carbohydrate food for energy:

- 1 cup (250 ml) dried noodles
- ½ cup (125 ml) dried grains like barley, quinoa, rice, farro
- 2 cups (500 ml) potatoes, sweet potato or squash, chopped



Bring soup to a boil. Turn heat down to low. Simmer until everything is soft, or about 10 minutes. Adjust seasoning using salt and pepper.

Use these topping to add more calories to your bowl of soup (choose one or more):

- 2 Tbsp. (30 ml) seeds, chopped nuts
- ¼ cup (60 ml) fried tortilla strips, croutons
- 2 Tbsp. (30 ml) protein powder*
- 1 egg*
- 1 Tbsp. (15 ml) sesame or chili oil
- 3 Tbsp. (45 ml) whipping cream
- ¼ cup (60 ml) grated cheese
- ¼ - ½ avocado



*After cooking, take the soup off the heat and whisk in.

Tips

- Eat leftovers within 2 days or store in 1 serving containers in the freezer for up to 3 months.
- If you have a sore mouth or pain swallowing, blend your soup after cooking to make it smooth.
- Add a protein food and extra toppings to your favourite canned or dry soup for more nutrition.

Recipes

Use the ingredients in these recipes and instructions on the front to make nutritious soups.

Beef cabbage roll

Makes 8 cups (2000 ml)

1 cup (250 ml) has 323 calories, 14 g protein

- ¼ cup (60 ml) vegetable oil
- 2 cups (454 g) ground beef
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 1 Tbsp. (15 ml) dried parsley
- 1 cup (250 ml) green cabbage, chopped
- 2 cups (500 ml) beef broth
- 2 cups (500 ml) canned tomatoes
- ½ cup (125 ml) parboiled rice
- Top with ¼ sliced avocado

Tofu and coconut curry (plant-based)

Makes 8 cups (2000 ml)

1 cup (250 ml) has 415 calories, 14 g protein

- ¼ cup (60 ml) coconut oil
- 1 package (350 g) firm tofu, cubed
- 1 Tbsp. (15 ml) fresh ginger, finely chopped
- 2 Tbsp. (30 ml) Thai red curry paste
- 1 cup (250 ml) sweet peppers, chopped
- 2 cups (500 ml) vegetable broth
- 2 cups (500 ml) full fat coconut milk
- 1 medium sweet potato, chopped
- Top with 2 Tbsp. (30 ml) pumpkin seeds

Creamy salmon chowder

Makes 8 cups (2000 ml)

1 cup (250 ml) has 411 calories, 24 g protein

- ¼ cup (60 ml) salted butter
- 1 lb (454 g) salmon fillet, chopped
- 2 cloves of garlic, finely chopped
- 2 tsp. (10 ml) dried thyme leaves
- 1 tsp. (5 ml) paprika
- 1 cup (250 ml) corn, frozen or canned
- 4 cups (1 L) whole 3.25% milk
- 2 medium white potatoes, chopped
- Top with ¼ cup (60 ml) grated cheese

Lentil and squash (plant-based)

Makes 8 cups (2000 ml)

1 cup (250 ml) has 338 calories, 15 g protein

- ¼ cup (60 ml) vegetable oil
- 1 small onion, chopped
- 2 cloves garlic, finely chopped
- 2 tsp. (10 ml) cumin
- 1 cup (250 ml) dried green lentils
- 4 cups (1 L) vegetable broth
- 2 cups (500 ml) butternut squash, chopped
- ½ cup (125 ml) pea protein powder
- Top with 2 Tbsp. (30 ml) chopped walnut

If you are a patient at the Odette Cancer Centre and you would like more nutrition information, please visit the Patient & Family Support office in TG 230 (T-wing, ground floor, room 230), call 416-480-4623, or visit [sunnybrook.ca/cancernutrition](https://www.sunnybrook.ca/cancernutrition)

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