

Drink to your health:

Choose liquids that meet your nutrition needs

For people with cancer

It is important to drink enough liquids to stay hydrated. The type of liquid you choose can also help you meet your protein and calorie needs. Protein helps your body heal. Calories give you energy and help you gain or maintain your weight.

Liquids with protein and calories

Choose these most often if you have lost weight, are eating less than usual, or need more protein:

- cow's milk, choose lactose-free if needed
- soy or pea milk
- high-protein milk (recipe on back), Fairlife® high protein milk, Natrel Plus™
- chocolate, hot chocolate, or golden milk
- Ovaltine®, Horlicks®, or Milo® with milk
- ice cream, frozen yogurt, milkshakes, lassi
- specialty coffee drinks, like Frappuccino®
- smoothies with added protein, like Bolthouse Farms® Protein Plus® smoothies
- plain or flavoured kefir
- yogurt drinks like Yop®
- store-bought eggnog
- soup with meat, fish, or poultry
- soup with dried beans, peas, or lentils
- cream soups with cow, soy, or pea milk
- nutrition supplement drinks, like Boost® or Ensure® – see the “Oral nutrition supplement” resource for more information



Liquids with calories

These liquids have calories but no protein:

- almond, rice, oat, hemp, or coconut milk
- juice, fruit nectar
- fruit smoothies with no added protein
- frozen juice bars, popsicles
- fruit punch, lemonade, sweet iced tea
- fruit syrup with water
- tea or coffee with sugar and milk
- soft drinks, pop
- Gatorade®, Vitamin Water®
- drink crystals, like Kool-Aid® or Tang®
- sherbet, Jell-O®
- bubble tea


Liquids with no protein and no calories

Choose these most often if you are eating normally and your weight is stable:

- tea, coffee
- water, ice chips
- broth*, consommé
- sugar-free or diet drinks, like diet pop, sugar-free Kool-Aid®, sugar-free Crystal Light®, G0®, sugar-free Vitamin Water®

*Bone broth is a low-calorie drink, with different amounts of protein depending how it is made. Pick calorie and protein containing liquids most often if you are losing weight.

Recipes

High-protein cow's milk	High-protein plant-based milk
Makes 1 cup (250 ml) 1 cup (250 ml) has 244 calories, 17 g protein	Makes 1 cup (250 ml) 1 cup (250 ml) has 230 calories, 29 g protein
Blend together: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 cup (250 ml) 3.25% whole milk• ¼ cup (60 ml) skim milk powder	Blend together: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 cup (250 ml) soy or pea milk• ¼ cup (60 ml) pea protein powder
Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You can make this in bigger batches and store in a covered container in the fridge. Use it like regular milk to drink and in recipes.• Try gently warming high-protein milk and adding sugar, cocoa powder, turmeric, cinnamon, or cardamom for a cozy drink.	

High-protein milkshake	High-protein plant-based milkshake
Makes 1 ¾ cup (425 ml) 1 cup (250 ml) has 316 calories, 13 g protein	Makes 1 ¾ cup (425 ml) 1 cup (250 ml) has 239 calories, 17 g protein
Blend together: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 cup (250 ml) 3.25% whole milk• ¼ cup (60 ml) skim milk powder• ¾ cup (175 ml) full-fat ice cream	Blend together: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• 1 cup (250 ml) soy or pea milk• ¼ cup (60 ml) pea protein powder• ¾ cup (175 ml) sorbet
Tips: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Add one of these to change the taste: vanilla, almond, lemon, or orange extract, instant coffee, flavoured syrups, fresh, frozen, or canned fruit, peanut butter, maple syrup, or jam.• Use a nutrition supplement drink instead of milk for even more calories and protein.	

Note: This is not a full list of brands or products. The Odette Cancer Centre does not recommend one brand over another. Talk to your dietitian if you need help understanding how this information applies to you.

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)

This resource should be used for information and does not replace medical advice. For questions, concerns, or additional information, contact your dietitian. This resource is for personal use only.