

Easy to swallow foods

For patients who have a sore mouth and throat from cancer or cancer treatment

Protein Foods

Meat and fish

- Stewed, braised, or ground meat and poultry
- Fish fillets, canned fish
- Casseroles (e.g. creamed chicken, tuna casserole, shepherd's pie)
- Blenderized or minced meats, pâté

Dairy (lactose-free if needed)

- Milk, milkshakes, smoothies with protein
- Cottage cheese, ricotta cheese, grated cheese (add to veggies, omelets, casseroles)
- Sour cream
- Yogurt (choose Greek or Icelandic for more protein), yogurt drinks, kefir
- Cream soups

Eggs

- Scrambled or poached eggs
- Quiche, soufflés, omelets
- Egg salad

Plant-based

- Soy milk
- Tofu
- Smooth nut butter
- Hummus, bean dip, baked or refried beans
- Mashed lentils, beans, or peas (mix with tahini or mayonnaise)
- Split pea, lentil, or bean soup

Grains

- Hot cereal (oatmeal, Cream of Wheat, oat bran, corn meal, rice cereal, grits, congee)
- Pierogi
- Buttered rice or noodles
- Soft pasta dishes (e.g. macaroni and cheese)
- Soft bread dipped in oil
- Soups thickened with barley, noodles, or rice
- Pancakes, French toast, or waffles with syrup

Vegetables

- Well-cooked, soft vegetables like squash, cauliflower, green and yellow beans, peas, turnip, beets, yams, zucchini, carrots
- Creamed spinach or corn
- Mashed, whipped, or scalloped potatoes
- Grated or shredded vegetables
- Vegetables added to smoothies

Fruit

- Avocado, banana, berries, melon, papaya, mango, soft pear
- Applesauce, baked apples, stewed fruit (e.g. plums, apricots, pears)
- Canned peaches or pears
- Fruit added to smoothies
- Low-acid juices like apple, grape, and white cranberry juice
- Fruit nectars like peach, pear, apricot, prune, and mango

Desserts

- Cheesecake, cream pie, custard, mousse
- Pudding, Jell-O
- Ice cream, frozen yogurt, sherbet
- Cookies dipped in milk or coffee

Others (great for adding extra calories)

- Gravy, butter, margarine, mayonnaise, oil
- Tahini
- Cream and cheese sauces
- Cream cheese
- Table cream, whipping cream
- Honey, jam, syrup
- Specialty coffee drinks (e.g. Frappuccino)
- Nutrition supplement drinks (e.g. Boost, Ensure, Scandishake, or generic/store brands)

Meal Ideas

- Oatmeal made with whole 3.25% milk topped with peanut butter and berries
- Congee made with tofu, eggs, or meat
- Pierogi with sour cream and green beans
- Tuna salad on soft bread with applesauce
- Macaroni and cheese with peas and tuna
- Well-cooked cauliflower dipped in hummus, with a side of sliced avocado
- Tender beef stew with potatoes and carrots
- Creamed salmon with mashed potatoes, beets, and creamed spinach
- Split pea soup with soft bread dipped in oil
- Cream of broccoli soup served over rice
- Shepherd's pie with a side of zucchini
- Scrambled tofu with baked beans and avocado
- Omelet served with mashed sweet potatoes
- Homemade smoothie with berries, spinach, Greek yogurt, and whole 3.25% milk

Helpful Hints

- **To make foods even softer:**
 - Cook meats, fish, chicken, and vegetables in sauces, stews, or soups until tender
 - Eat foods with gravies and sauces or drink fluids with your meals to help wash foods down
 - Dunk cookies and crackers in tea, coffee, or milk and dip bread in oil or cheese sauce
 - Use a blender to make smooth soups and smoothies
- **To add extra calories and protein:**
 - Use high-fat dairy products like whole 3.25% milk, cream, and full-fat yogurt in recipes
 - Include a food from the “protein foods” section at every meal
 - Add skim milk powder, unflavoured protein powder, or shredded cheese to soups or veggies
 - Beat an egg into hot cereal or soup while it is cooking
 - Blend healthy fats like avocado, olive oil, and nut butters into smoothies
- **Avoid foods that can make eating more painful:**
 - ☒ Rough foods like raw vegetables, hard fruits, toast, crackers, nuts, popcorn, and chips
 - ☒ Acidic foods like tomatoes, citrus fruits (e.g. lemons, oranges), pickles, and vinegar
 - ☒ Spicy foods like pepper, chili, hot sauce, and barbecue sauce
 - ☒ Fried, crispy foods like samosas and chicken wings
 - ☒ Tough, dry meats
 - ☒ Carbonated beverages (e.g. pop, soda water) and alcohol
 - ☒ Very hot or cold foods – these can be painful if your skin is sensitive

If swallowing soft foods becomes too painful, you may need a liquid diet. Ask your dietitian about high-calorie and high-protein fluids. Nutrition supplement drinks may help.

If you are a patient at the Odette Cancer Centre and you would like more nutrition information, please visit the Nutrition Resource Centre, T-Wing ground floor, TG-261 (across from the café) or call 416-480-5000 ext. 3438.