

## Healthy eating and active living off-therapy

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Following your therapy for cancer you may develop health problems. These are called late effects. Some common late effects include heart disease, diabetes, kidney disease, osteoporosis (bone weakness) and problems maintaining a healthy weight.

To make sure you live the healthiest, most enjoyable life off-therapy, here are some suggestions to help you take care of your health today and in the future.



# Healthy eating

Healthy eating may help prevent the onset of late effects. This includes:

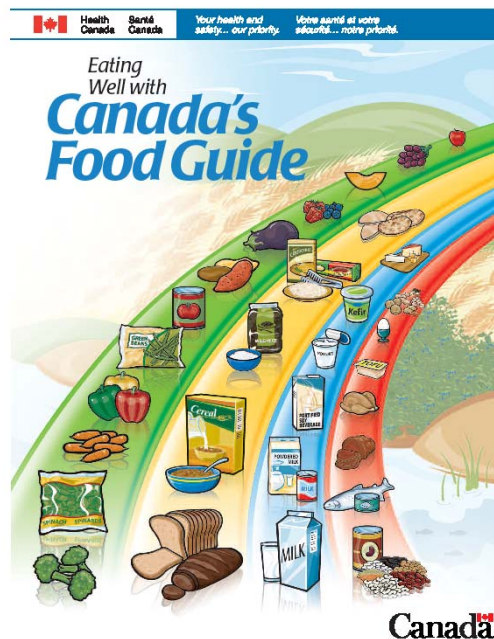
- preventing weight gain
- improving your level of energy
- lowering your blood pressure
- improving blood cholesterol levels

“Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide” is all about healthy eating. The guide puts foods into 4 food groups.

1. Vegetables and Fruit
2. Grain Products
3. Milk Products
4. Meats and Alternatives

It shows us how to eat a balanced diet that includes a variety of foods. A meal is balanced if it includes foods from at least 3 of the 4 food groups. Snacks are balanced if they have foods from 2 of the 4 food groups.

Go to this website to get a copy of “Eating Well with Canada’s Food Guide”  
[www.hc-sc.gc.ca](http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca)



## Steps to healthy eating

### 1. Choose your foods carefully:

Make your meals and snacks from the food groups in Canada's Food Guide.

- Include at least 5 servings of fruits and vegetables a day. They could be fresh, frozen or canned in juice or water. Examples of a serving are:

- a handful of baby carrots
- a small salad with low fat dressing
- a small apple



- Choose whole wheat or multigrain breads, cereals, pasta or rice.
- Choose lower fat meats like chicken, turkey, fish and leaner cuts of beef and pork. Try tofu or legumes such as kidney beans, chick peas or lentils.
- Choose lower fat milk and dairy products such as skim or 1% milk, low fat or fat-free yogurts or low fat cheeses. Include 2 to 4 servings a day.

Examples of one serving are:

- 1 cup or 250 ml of milk
- $\frac{3}{4}$  cup or 175 ml of yogurt
- 1 oz or 30 g of cheese

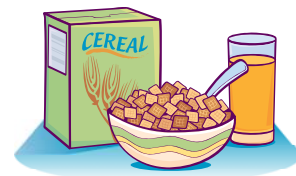


These foods are calcium rich and will help to keep your bones healthy. Milk and milk products are an excellent source of dietary calcium. A lack of calcium in the diet over time can lead to thin and fragile bones that break easily. Remember your bones!

Talk to your dietitian, nurse or doctor if you do not drink milk or milk products, or have questions about your calcium intake.

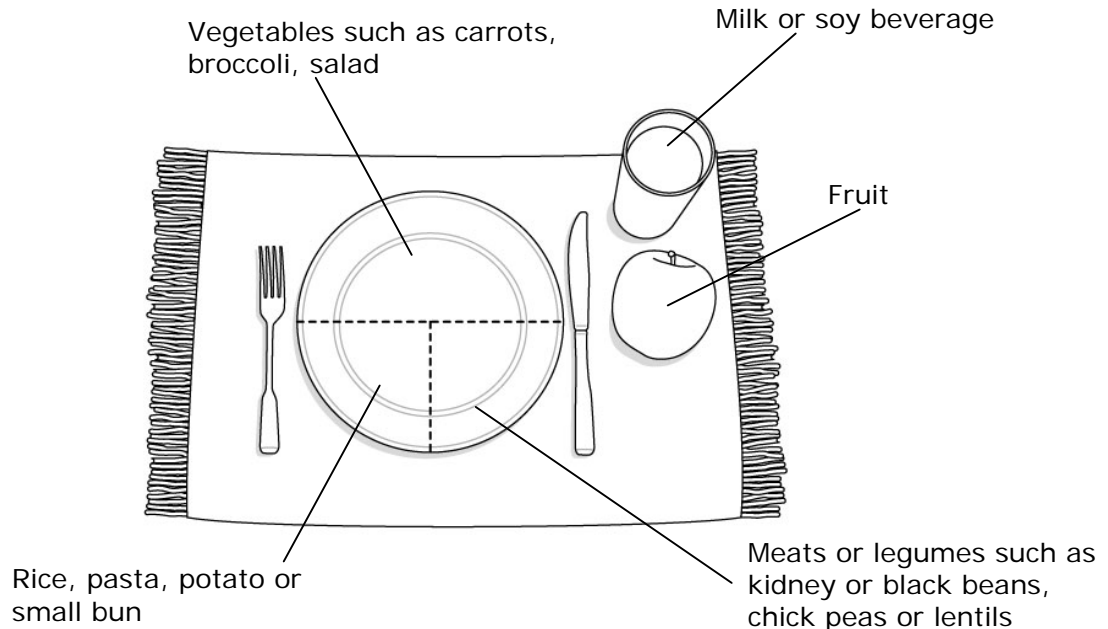
### 2. Don't skip meals:

- Eat 3 small meals and 1 or 2 snacks every day.
- Include breakfast every morning.



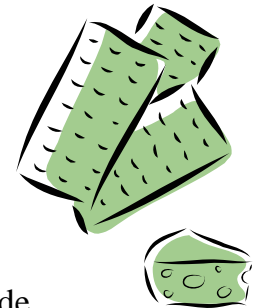
### 3. Know your portion sizes:

- Use Canada's Food Guide and this picture of a plate as your guide to food choices and portion sizes.



### 4. Eat between meals:

- Plan to include 1 or 2 snacks in between meals.
- Plan or prepare your snacks ahead of time so that they are readily available in pre-portioned snacks. Examples include cut up fruits and vegetables, whole grain crackers and low fat cheese, low fat yogurt or a low fat granola bar.
- Make your snacks healthy by keeping them low in fat and include foods from 2 of the food groups in Canada's Food Guide.



For more meal and snack ideas, check out: [www.chatelaine.com](http://www.chatelaine.com) click on the "Food" tab and then click on the "Recipe" tab.

This website has some great recipes and cooking tips. However, the meal plans are not recommended for use as guide to weight loss.

## 5. Use healthy cooking methods:

- **Choose baked, broiled, steamed, roasted, poached or barbequed** rather than fried or smoked foods.
- **Limit the amount of added fats** such as butter, margarine and salad dressings to foods. If needed, use a small amount of vegetable or olive oil.

## 6. Know when you are hungry:

Learn whether you may at times eat for reasons other than hunger. This can lead to overeating. It is helpful to become aware of the triggers that may cause you to overeat such as watching TV or to help cope with an emotion. So before you have something to eat, stop and take a moment to ask yourself these questions:

- Am I physically hungry? Do I have hunger pains or do I feel tired or that I have no energy?
- Am I eating because I feel bored, stressed, sad or angry?
- Am I thirsty rather than hungry?

Allowing hunger to be your guide can help you to take charge of the food you eat. For more tips on how to recognize your hunger and healthy eating, visit the “Am I Hungry” website: [www.amihungry.org](http://www.amihungry.org).

**Learn what situations or emotions cause you to overeat. This will help you plan for better ways to cope. Talk to your dietitian for more information.**

Eat slowly. It takes 20 minutes for us to feel full, so wait before you go back for second helpings. Avoid fad diets as they can lead to cravings and overeating. Remember, all foods can fit into a healthy eating plan.

**Ways I can eat healthier:**



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Physical activity

Physical activity can be very important in helping to deal with some of the problems you may face after your treatment for cancer.

**Regular and safe activity can help you in these ways:**

- prevent weight gain or help you lose weight
- keep your muscles strong and flexible
- keep your bones strong
- improve balance and co-ordination
- keep your heart and lungs healthy
- help you feel less tired and have more energy
- improve your appetite
- help to relieve or manage pain
- help improve your posture
- prevent constipation
- socialize with friends



## Steps to being active:

- Do activities that are fun, interesting and motivating.
- Talk with your doctor about physical activity to make sure your heart and body are ready.
- Start slowly and gradually increase the length and intensity of the exercise.
- Aim to increase your activity gradually until you are moderately active for at least 90 minutes on most days of the week. Moderate activity is equal to taking a brisk walk. You can spread your activity throughout the day. For example, take 3 – 20 minute walks and play 30 minutes of basketball during the day.
- Do activities that include strengthening, balance, coordination and flexibility. Try these activities:
  - going to physical education classes at school
  - joining a fitness club
  - going to camp
  - walking
  - biking
  - dancing
  - yoga
  - swimming
  - gardening
  - martial arts such as karate
  - climbing stairs
  - any activity you enjoy
- Limit the time you spend on activities that are not physically active, such as watching TV, using the computer or playing video games.
- Enjoy your activities with a friend, family member or pet.
- Stop any exercises if you feel any pain or are too tired at any time.



**Ways I can be more active:**



1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_

## Where to go for more help and information

### Contact:

- your family doctor or clinic
- a dietitian (go to [www.dietitians.ca](http://www.dietitians.ca) to find a dietitian near you)
- a physiotherapist

### Helpful websites:

- Active Healthy Kids Canada: [www.activehealthykids.ca](http://www.activehealthykids.ca)
- Association of Cancer Online Resources: [www.acor.org](http://www.acor.org)
- Canada's National Institute of Cancer website: [www.ncic.cancer.ca](http://www.ncic.cancer.ca)
- Canada's Physical Activity Guide (Health Canada):  
[www.healthcanada.ca/paguide/](http://www.healthcanada.ca/paguide/)
- Children's Oncology Group: [www.childrensoncologygroup.org](http://www.childrensoncologygroup.org)
- Survivorship Guidelines: [www.survivorshipguidelines.org](http://www.survivorshipguidelines.org)
- The United States National Institute of Cancer website: [www.cancer.gov](http://www.cancer.gov)