

Chemotherapy and radiation therapy to the head and neck can make the lining of your throat inflamed and sore. It may feel as if you have a lump in your throat or you feel like your throat is burning. You may also have trouble swallowing. These problems may make it hard to eat and cause weight loss.

Why does it happen?

Some types of chemotherapy and radiation to the head and neck can harm fast growing cells, such as those in the lining of your throat. Your risk for a sore throat, trouble swallowing or other throat problems will depend on:

- How much radiation you are getting.
- If you are getting chemotherapy and radiation therapy at the same time.
- Whether you use tobacco or drink alcohol during your course of cancer treatment.

How can you manage it?

- **Use mealtime tactics to make swallowing easier.**
 - Eat 5 or 6 small meals each day instead of 3 large meals. It may be easier to eat a smaller amount of food at one time.
 - Cook foods until they are soft and tender.
 - Moisten and soften foods with gravy, sauces, broth, or yogurt.
 - Consume liquids with meals.
 - Sip drinks through a straw; this may make them easier to swallow.
- **Avoid foods that are hard to swallow or irritating.**
 - Avoid coarse foods that do not soften in the mouth.
 - Avoid sharp and crunchy foods like potato and tortilla chips.
 - Avoid spicy foods.
 - Avoid acidic foods like lemons, lime, oranges, and tomatoes.
 - Be careful eating hot foods to reduce the risk of burning your mouth. Cold foods may be soothing.
 - Avoid alcohol.

- **Choose foods that are easy to swallow.**
 - Try breakfast foods like instant oatmeal, grits, pancakes, waffles, and cold cereal that has been softened in milk.
 - For a main dish, try chicken, tuna or egg salad, soups and stews, soft cooked fish, tofu, and meatloaf.
 - Pick side dishes like cottage or ricotta cheese, macaroni and cheese, mashed white or sweet potatoes, and rice or risotto.
 - Try desserts like custard, tapioca pudding, ice cream, milkshakes, and sherbet.
 - Choose snacks like creamy nut butters, applesauce, gelatin, smoothies, and yogurt.

Foods and Drinks that are easy to Chew and Swallow

Types	Foods
Main Meals and Other food options	Chicken Salad Tuna Salad Egg Salad Eggs (Soft boiled or scrambled) Cottage cheese Ricotta cheese Custard Tapioca Creamy Peanut Butter Creamy Almond Butter Cooked refined cereals (Cream of Wheat, Cream of Rice and Instant oatmeal or grits) Cold cereal which has been left to soak in milk until soft. Macaroni and cheese Mashed Potatoes Sweet Potatoes Soups Stews Soft cooked fish Tofu Cooked rice, risotto Meatballs Meatloaf
Desserts and Snacks	Applesauce Baked apples Baked bananas Gelatin Ice cream & Milkshakes Puddings Smoothies Peaches & Pears Sherbet Yogurt or Fruit Yogurt Pancakes Waffles

**Don't skip a meal. Always consider a Nutrition Supplement as a meal replacement!
Ask a Registered Dietitian for a recommendation.**

Contact PearlPoint Cancer Support today by phone or email:
 (877) 467-1936 X 101 or guidance@pearlpoint.org
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