

Weight gain can be common in cancer patients. Weight gain may result from certain types of cancer, medications, hormone therapy, or chemotherapy. Cancer and its treatments can cause fatigue and changes in schedule that result in decreased physical activity and weight gain. For some, a change in eating behavior due to stress, fear, or depression may lead to increased food intake that may cause weight gain. Fluid retention, which causes swelling, may be another reason weight may increase. The following tips can be helpful for those wanting to maintain a healthy weight before, during, and after cancer treatment:

- > **Eat a variety of fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and beans.**
 - All of these foods are high in fiber and low in calories.
 - Fiber helps you feel fuller longer.
- > **Choose whole grain foods.**
 - Whole grains also contain fiber and are a lasting energy source.
 - Whole grain foods include whole grain breads, cereals, pasta, crackers, and brown rice.
- > **Choose lean proteins.**
 - Protein foods also help you feel fuller longer.
 - Lean proteins include eggs, fish, skinless chicken, turkey, lean beef, lean pork, beans, and soy products.
- > **Choose low-fat or fat-free dairy products.**
 - Low-fat and fat-free dairy products contain the same amount of protein as regular dairy products.
 - Low-fat and fat-free dairy products include 1% or skim milk, low-fat yogurt, reduced-fat cheese, and cottage cheese.

- > **Limit foods high in fat and calories.**
 - High-fat foods like regular butter, creamy dressing and sauces, sour cream, mayonnaise, fried foods, and dessert contain more calories and can contribute to weight gain.
 - Limit frequency and portions of high-fat foods and choose reduced-fat items when possible.
 - Avoid high-fat cooking methods, such as pan or deep frying. Broiling, steaming, grilling, and roasting are recommended.
- > **Avoid high-calorie beverages.**
 - Avoid drinking large amounts of sugar-sweetened beverages such as sodas, sports drinks, sweetened teas, lemonade, and sweetened fruit juice.
 - Choose low-calorie, low-sugar beverage options such as water and unsweetened tea.
 - Limit or reduce alcohol consumption. If alcohol is consumed at all, it is best to limit to no more than one drink per day for women and two drinks for men.
- > **Avoid eating when you are not physically hungry.**
 - Listen to your body. Don't confuse boredom or stress for hunger.
 - Try making a list of alternate activities you can do when you have the urge to eat when not hungry.
- > **Watch your portion sizes.**
 - Try measuring out your portions so you know exactly how much you are eating.
 - Check the nutrition label to determine serving sizes.
 - Choose to eat all meals and snacks off of a plate rather than out of the package so you can keep track of how much you are eating.

- > **Limit eating out.**
 - Restaurants often serve large portions of higher calorie and higher fat foods.
 - Limit eating out so you are not tempted with large portions of these foods as often.
- > **Write down your intake.**
 - Studies show that those who record all of their food and drink intake eat less calories than those who do not.
 - Keeping a food journal could help keep you mindful about appropriate portion sizes and urges to eat when not hungry.
- > **Try exercise.**
 - Aim for 30 minutes of exercise every day if able.
 - Always discuss any changes in exercise with your physician.
- > **Always discuss weight gain with your physician.**
 - A physician can help determine the cause of weight gain and can give recommendations for how to appropriately manage weight gain.
 - Do not go on a diet to lose weight without discussing with your physician first.