

## References

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# Chemotherapy and Eating

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Eating well and making sure your nutritional status is as good as it can be whilst you are receiving chemotherapy is extremely important.

You will have been informed that whilst you are receiving chemotherapy treatment your immune system can be affected and this can lead to increased susceptibility to infection.

Eating a good diet can help the immune system work efficiently.

### **Will chemotherapy affect what I can eat?**

Most people having chemotherapy will not need to change their diet. There is no clear evidence that a special, cleaner diet makes any difference to how the person feels or any increase in infection rates.

It is important that you eat and drink a healthy diet.

### **What can I eat? Facts and Myths**

Continue to eat and drink a well balanced diet. Here are some food stuffs which patients have asked about previously:

- Salad – yes. Remember to wash all salad thoroughly, even pre washed salad.
- Dairy products – use only pasteurised dairy products.
- Pro Biotic Yoghurts – yes. Pasteurised milk is used.
- Cheese - yes to all cheeses with the exception of mould ripened cheeses and blue veined cheese.
- Fruit – yes, wash the fruit before eating.
- Meat – always ensure that the meat is cooked fully.

- Seafood – as long as it has been cooked thoroughly.
- Alcohol – yes, but only on a special occasion.
- Take Aways – yes but ensure you go to a place where you have been before and had no problems.
- Eggs - do not eat raw eggs, ensure the eggs are fully cooked.

Some chemotherapy drugs may require other food/drink restrictions but you will be advised of these when you start your chemotherapy.

### **Are there any problems that may occur whilst I am on chemotherapy?**

You may not experience any problems through your treatment at all, however, there are some problems that can affect your dietary intake:

- Sore or dry mouth
- Taste changes
- Tiredness
- Constipation/diarrhoea
- Feeling sick
- Difficulty in swallowing
- Poor appetite.

### **What do I do if I have any problems?**

If you develop any problems, then discuss these with your consultant or chemotherapy nurse. They will be able to offer suggestions to help alleviate the problems or improve them for you. It may be beneficial for you to be referred to a dietician who can give advice on eating well and maintaining your weight.