

The Power of Nutrition

AAMAC

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Outline

- Why food matters
- Your nutrition needs during treatment
- Treatment related side-effects
- Common questions



Why food matters

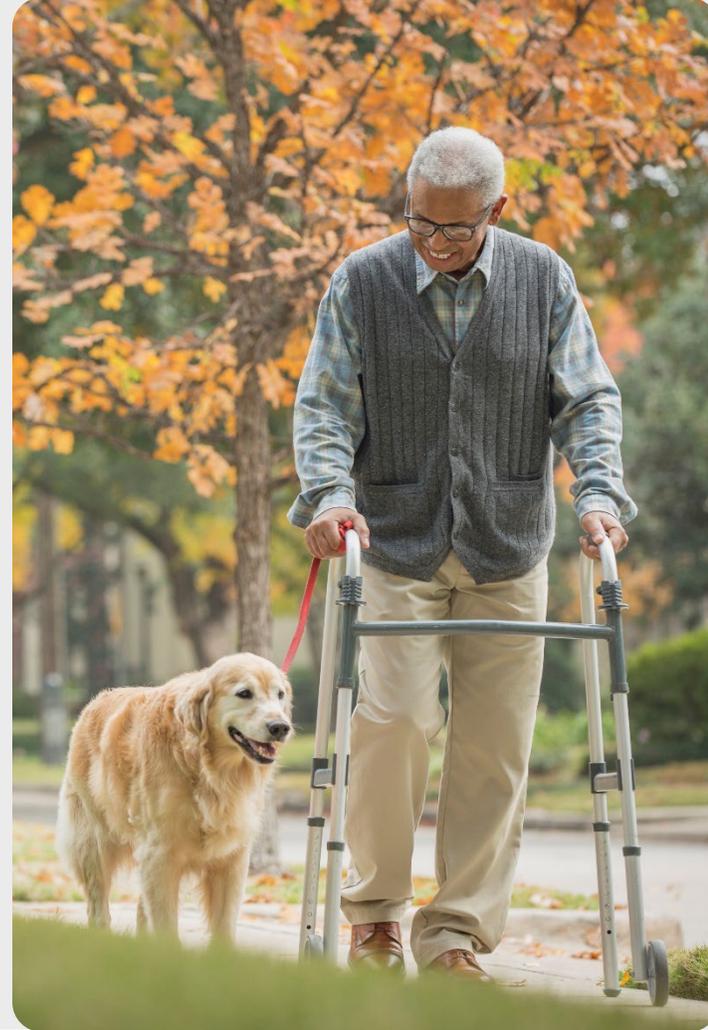
- Maintain your strength and energy
- Help manage side effects
- Help you to heal and recover
- Manage fatigue
- Fight infections
- Improve your quality of life



Your nutrition needs
during treatment

Extra energy

- You may need more energy (calories) than usual right now to help support your body's ability to heal from treatment
- Energy comes from foods and drinks



Extra protein

You need more protein than usual right now



In active treatment: 1-1.5g/kg body weight (GVHD up to 2.0g/kg) vs 0.8g/kg not on treatment

Fluids and hydration



- At least 8 cups (2 litres) and all fluids count (except alcohol)
 - Digestion
 - Support bowels; prevent constipation by keeping stools soft
 - Help support blood volume to carry nutrients around the body
 - Replenish fluids lost from diarrhea, vomiting, fever

Vitamins and minerals

- Aim to eat a variety of **foods first** before using pill forms
 - The way nutrients act in the body may be different in food vs pill form
 - You get the benefits of other nutrients including fibre when eating the whole food
- High doses of some vitamins can interfere with treatment

Not sure? Ask your healthcare team: pharmacist, cancer doctor, or dietitian



Phytonutrients

- Try to eat a **variety** of plant foods daily to get different phytonutrients and increase fibre





Managing side effects

- Poor appetite
- Fatigue
- Nausea
- Dry mouth or thick saliva
- Taste changes
- Smell changes
- Bowels (if time allows)

Poor appetite

- Eat small meals more often
- Make every bite and sip count
- Favourite foods
- Get enough to drink
- Distract yourself
- Eat with others
- Light activity
- Set alarms or reminders



Fatigue

Cooking When You Have Low Energy

When you are tired (have low energy), it may be hard to:

- Think of meal ideas
- Make a grocery list
- Shop for groceries
- Cook meals
- Clean-up after cooking

These activities use:

- Physical energy which can tire your body
- Mental energy which can tire your mind



Try the tips to help you save energy, time, and stress when planning and making meals.

Plan ahead

Make the most of your energy when you have it. Pace yourself—do one task at a time. Include family or delegate tasks if able.

- Plan what meals you will have for the week ahead of time.
- Keep a list of your favorite recipes or meals.
- Try grouping meals with similar ingredients, like one-pot meals, chicken, or vegetarian. This can help use leftovers and limit mental energy used to plan different meals.
- Have a few quick meals to make when you have low energy. These meals include foods or ingredients you often have at home.
- Consider recipes that make large amounts. This allows you to have planned leftovers.
- Use a slow cooker, make a one-pot meal, or plan to eat leftovers as a meal on days when you are busy or more tired.
- Choose ingredients in recipes that require less time and energy to prepare. Try frozen chopped onion or shredded cheese.

 Ask a friend or family member to help with shopping, cooking, or clean-up. This can be a way to spend time with a partner, friend, or child.

Grocery shopping

These tips may help save your energy at the grocery store.

Make a list

- Before you go to the store, make a list of what you need. Sort your list by sections of the grocery store, like produce or freezer. Or organize it by your usual path through the aisles.
- Keep ingredients or foods that you use often in stock for meals that can be made quickly.
- Include pre-cooked meals, ready-to-eat foods, pre-chopped foods, frozen foods, shredded cheese, or canned meat, fish, or beans.

Go to smaller stores or stores you are familiar with

- Smaller stores require less walking.
- Familiar stores may make it easier to find items on your list.

Shop when the store is less busy

- Less busy times tend to be calmer and have fewer crowds. This may save your energy and make it easier to shop.

Use a cart or shopping trolley

- Try one even for small shopping trips.

Take breaks

- Stores may have chairs or benches where you can rest while shopping. These may be near pharmacies or at the front of stores.

Shop online if available

- Try shopping for your full list or just the heavier or bulkier items.
- Choose to pick up your groceries or have them delivered (sometimes for a fee).
- Ask family or friends to pick up items for you when they go shopping.



Nausea

- Take medication (as prescribed)
- Drink enough fluids
- Eat small meals more often
- Take your time eating
- Eat when your appetite is best
- Foods with low or no aromas
- Avoid greasy, sweet, or spicy



Taste changes

- Bitter
- Bland
- Metallic
- Salty
- Sweet



Dry mouth or thick saliva

- Good mouth care
- Rinse your mouth before and after meals
- Drink enough fluids



Smell changes



Eating with Taste and Smell Changes

This handout provides tips to try if your taste or smell has changed. Try the tips you think may work in your life.

Taste changes

- Try new food and drinks to find flavours that taste good to you.
- Try a new mouth care routine. See "**Mouthcare**" for details.
- Make a list of foods that taste good. Eat these foods more often.
- If you have a bad taste in your mouth, choose soft foods that need less chewing. They will be in your mouth for a shorter time.
- Don't smoke cigarettes or use tobacco.

Too bitter

- Cooking your food may make it taste less bitter.
- Try adding:
 - salt to broccoli, Brussels sprouts, or cauliflower
 - sugar to coffee or tea
 - citrus fruit or vinegar to pasta, rice, or cooked vegetables
 - cream, cream cheese, or creamy sauces to vegetables, potatoes, or hot cereal
- Marinate meat in citrus juice (orange, lemon, or lime), barbeque sauce, or vinegar.
- Eat food that is cold or at room temperature.

Too bland

- Try a different food with every bite.



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Constipation



- Get enough to drink
 - Eat foods with fibre
 - Do light activity
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- Ask your cancer doctor about a “bowel routine”

Diarrhea

- Eat small meals more often
- Get enough to drink
- Limit foods that may cause diarrhea or make it worse

Oral Rehydration Solution

Recipes

Oral Rehydration Solutions (ORS) are drinks that can help prevent dehydration. ORS contain water, salt, sugar, and electrolytes to replace:

- electrolytes (sodium, chloride, potassium)
- fluids lost (vomiting, diarrhea, high output ostomy, or sweating a lot)



ORS will not stop what is causing the fluid loss. After 24 hours contact your healthcare team if you are still vomiting, have diarrhea, or are emptying your ostomy bag more than usual.

You can find some ready-made ORS in stores (such as Pedialyte® and Hydralyte®). You can also use the recipes below to make your own.

Instructions

For each recipe:

1. Carefully measure all ingredients.
2. Combine and mix well until all granules are dissolved.
3. Store in the fridge.



Base	Recipe
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 4 cups (1 L) Gatorade G2®, any flavour• ½ teaspoon (3 g) salt

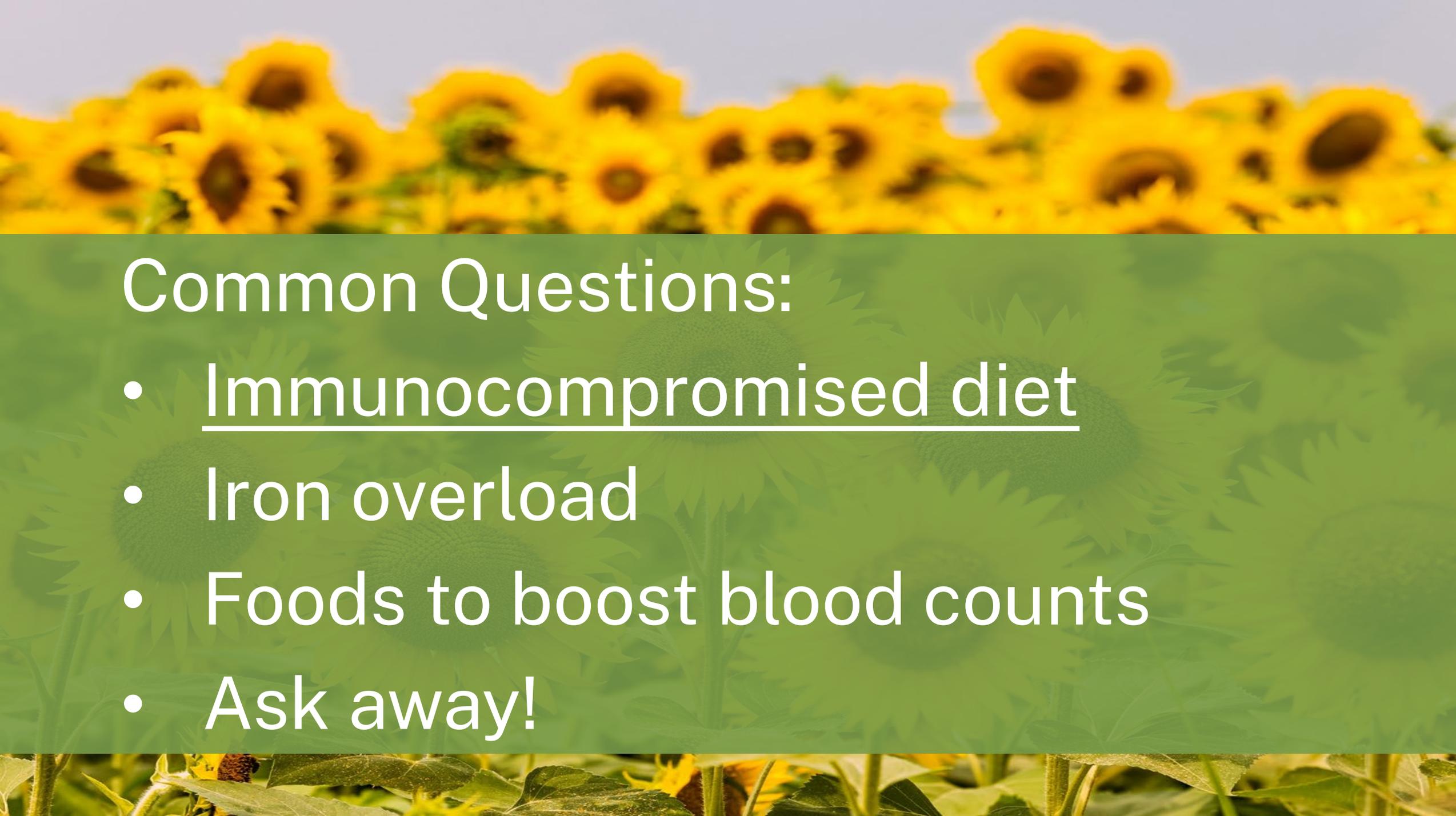


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Diarrhea and fibre

Choose foods with soluble fibre





Common Questions:

- Immunocompromised diet
- Iron overload
- Foods to boost blood counts
- Ask away!

Registered dietitians

Ask your cancer doctor or nurse for a referral.

Nutrition questions?
Call Health Link 811
and ask to speak to a dietitian.



Reliable websites

- [AHS videos and classes: Classes, Groups & Events | Alberta Health Services](#)
- [AHS nutrition handouts: Nutrition Education | Alberta Health Services](#)
- <https://food-guide.canada.ca/en/> (Canada's Food Guide)
- www.aicr.org (American Institute for Cancer Research – Reduce your Cancer Risk and Healthy Recipes)
- www.unlockfood.ca (Dietitians of Canada)
- www.cancer.ca (Canadian Cancer Society – Prevention and Screening)

Reliable websites

- www.bccancer.bc.ca (British Columbia Cancer Agency – Nutrition Support)
- www.nourishonline.ca (Nourish Magazine)
- www.cancer.org (American Cancer Society)
- www.ellicsrkitchen.ca (Princess Margaret Cancer Centre in Toronto)
- <https://www.eatright.org> (Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics)
- <https://www.mskcc.org> (Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center)
- <https://www.nccih.nih.gov/health/cancer-in-depth> (National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health)