



Helping Your Child Eat During Cancer Treatment

Cancer treatment can alter a child's food preferences and appetite. A pediatric clinical dietitian nutritionist can help you plan your child's diet.

Side effects and symptoms of cancer treatment

- Appetite loss
- Sore mouth or throat
- Taste changes
- Dry mouth
- Nausea and vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Dental problems
- Weight gain or loss



How to manage symptoms that affect eating during treatment

- Let your child eat whenever they are hungry
- Limit the amount your child drinks at mealtimes
- Make mealtimes fun by altering when and where meals happen to find what works best



Things to avoid:

- Encourage your child to eat without resorting to force. Avoid using threats, nagging, or punishment if they cannot consume enough food.

Quick and easy snack ideas

- Yogurt & fruit shakes
- Plain/buttered popcorn
- Fresh, washed vegetables with dips
- Chicken/fish spreads on crackers/breads.
- Pretzels, chips, or crackers.
- Fresh, canned, or dried fruit chunks dipped in yogurt, nut butter, or marshmallow fluff
- Cheese cubes with crackers or fruit.

Reference: "Helping Your Child Eat during Treatment | Memorial Sloan Kettering Cancer Center."

www.mskcc.org, 13 June 2023, www.mskcc.org/cancer-care/patient-education/helping-your-child-eat-during-treatment.

