

# Nutrition Guidance for Colon and Rectal Cancers

## Before Radiation Treatment

IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU EAT A HEALTHY DIET FULL OF VEGETABLES (TRY TO TAKE IN AT LEAST FOUR SERVINGS DAILY) AND FRUITS (STRIVE FOR TWO TO THREE SERVINGS DAILY). DRINK MILK, WATER AND FRUIT JUICES MADE WITH 100 PERCENT JUICE.

## During Radiation Treatment

DURING TREATMENT IT IS VERY IMPORTANT THAT YOU TRY TO PROVIDE YOUR BODY WITH ADEQUATE NUTRITION TO KEEP YOUR BODY HEALTHY AND STRONG DURING TREATMENT.

### MAINTAIN WEIGHT

- Try to maintain weight during your treatment
- If you are overweight, do not follow a strict weight loss diet
- Consume small frequent meals

### REDUCE INTAKE OF FOODS HIGH IN FAT

- Avoid fried foods
- Try reduced or fat-free versions of salad dressing, mayonnaise and dairy products
- Consume at least two servings of fish each week. Sources high in omega-3 fatty acids include mackerel, lake trout, sardines, herring, tuna and salmon
- Choose leaner choices of meat. Best choices would be skinless chicken, turkey or cornish hen. Try lean red meats labeled “choice” or “select.” Make sure that meats have no more than 15 percent fat
- Limit the use of butter and partially hydrogenated margarine and cook with extra-virgin olive oil or canola oil

### CONSUME MORE WATER

- Consume more water and non-caffeinated beverages
- Drink at least six to eight cups of room-temperature fluids to help prevent dehydration
- Reduce or eliminate alcoholic beverages

### ADJUST FIBER INTAKE DURING DIARRHEA

- Consume foods high in soluble fiber such as bananas, white rice, applesauce, oatmeal and barley that produce a more formed solid bowel movement
- Avoid foods high in insoluble fiber such as whole wheat breads, bran cereals, raw vegetables, fruit peels, beans, peas and popcorn
- Foods such as cabbage, broccoli, cauliflower, cucumbers and turnips may cause gas or other abdominal discomfort

### USE DAIRY PRODUCTS SPARINGLY

- If lactose intolerant, try yogurt, soymilk, buttermilk or any lactose free milk such as Lactaid®

### MONITOR SUGAR-FREE FOODS

- Avoid sugar-free foods that contain sorbitol, mannitol or maltitol as they may worsen diarrhea

### TRY KEFIR®

- This is a yogurt-type probiotic–fortified food that can help restore the healthy balance of gut bacteria and help reduce the severity of gastrointestinal problems

See other side for after treatment guidelines.

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## After Radiation Treatment

### ACHIEVE A HEALTHY WEIGHT

- Start by losing weight gradually
- Avoid weight gain and increases in abdominal fat

### EXERCISE DAILY

- Participate in moderate activity for at least 30 minutes a day, then aim for 60 minutes a day
- Limit sedentary habits such as watching television

### CONSUME MORE WATER AND NON-CAFFEINATED BEVERAGES

- Reduce alcohol intake
  - Men: limit two drinks per day
  - Women: limit one drink per day
- One drink equals
  - 5 oz of wine
  - 12 oz of beer
  - 1.5 oz of 80-proof liquor

### CONSUME MORE FRUITS AND VEGETABLES

- Consume at least three servings of vegetables and two servings of fruit daily
- Try to include more vegetables that have a lot of fiber such as broccoli, potato skins, carrots, prunes, apples, etc.

### REDUCE INTAKE OF RED MEATS TO 18oz PER WEEK

### AVOID PROCESSED MEATS

- Processed meat is defined as red meat that has been preserved by smoking, curing, salting or adding other chemical preservatives
- These include sausage, bacon, ham, bologna, salami and corned beef

### REDUCE INTAKE OF FOODS HIGH IN SALT

- Consume more fresh and frozen vegetables
- Reduce intake of processed foods
- Read food labels and pick foods with less than 20 percent sodium per serving
- Use sodium only when cooking and not at the table
- Use natural herbs and spices to flavor foods in place of salt

### REDUCE INTAKE OF FOODS HIGH IN FAT

- Limit intake of junk food that are processed such as cookies, chips, candy bars, high-fat pastries, cheese burgers, fried foods and pizzas