

Nutrition for Chemotherapy

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The resources below are for educational purposes only and do not constitute medical advice. Please consult your cancer care providers before adding anything to your treatment plan. The [KNOWoncology provider network](#) lists evidence-informed integrative oncology providers for best guidance.

[Savor \(https://ademcura.savorhealth.com/portal/\)](https://ademcura.savorhealth.com/portal/) is a link for free oncology nutrition advice. It is created by oncology nutritionists and texts you recipes and nutritional support for chemotherapy.

Chemotherapy substantially increases your protein requirements because your body needs to repair cells, so please include protein at every meal (especially breakfast because it helps stabilize blood sugar). Include small frequent meals that are easy to digest such as soups, stews and smoothies. Aim for a Mediterranean Diet with added olive oil 2-4 TBSP daily. Nutrient dense smoothies can include 1 scoop of grass fed whey protein, a fat source such as ½ avocado, coconut milk, almond butter or organic yogurt, plus organic mixed berries and spinach, plus a liquid; water, organic mixed berry juice, almond milk or coconut milk. In a placebo controlled trial, adding whey protein daily during chemotherapy resulted in better nutritional status, less digestive side effects, less bone marrow suppression during chemotherapy, and lower rates of malnutrition.[i] If grass fed whey is not tolerated, other protein powder options include OrGain vegan protein powder, organic soy milk, grass fed collagen peptides, hemp protein powder and sprouted pumpkin seed protein powder. Good quality protein powders for chemotherapy:

<https://us.fullscript.com/plans/jgreen1713648989-protein-powder-options-for-chemotherapy-support>

Please do your best to avoid artificial sweeteners, white sugar and alcohol. Please avoid grapefruit juice because it impairs liver metabolism of drugs.

Hydration is very important to help clear chemotherapy through the kidneys and prevent constipation. Notice your urine color because the aim is to have urine that is pale (isn't very



yellow/concentrated). Drink clear, cold liquids such as Zevia ginger ale, hot or cold herbal teas, broths, ice chips or frozen juice/herbal ice chips. Add in an Effer-hydrate sugar free electrolyte tablet to your water if you feel dehydrated at all, or if you've had any diarrhea or vomiting.

For taste changes, discuss zinc supplementation with your Naturopathic Doctor, add lemon, lime or mint to foods to override metallic tastes, or suck on xylitol candies (ginger, mint, lemon, cinnamon). If tastes linger, rinse your mouth after meals, and if there is any sign of mouth sores, rinse with baking soda and salt water after each meal. If smells are nauseating, eat food at room temperature or eat from covered containers. For nausea, try mint tea[ii], chamomile tea[iii] or fresh grated ginger tea[iv] (hot or iced). If you get heartburn, remain sitting upright or lie with your head raised up for at least an hour after eating, avoid eating spicy, fried, sugary foods, tomato-based foods, citrus, carbonated drinks and caffeine.

If you feel fluey/exhausted, consider IV rehydration which can really improve tolerance of chemotherapy. If weight loss occurs, please talk to your oncology team, nutritionist and/or integrative oncology provider. 2 TBSP coconut oil, or a Medium Chain Triglyceride liquid supplement, helps to maintain weight. Coconut oil can be made into a "hot chocolate" with cacao powder and honey, or drizzled over steamed vegetables or added to soups/oatmeal for extra calories. If adding MCT oil for the first time, start with 1 tsp and slowly work up to 2 TBSP. It's best to add this in at night because it makes you feel full and we want you to eat all your normal meals.

Research on Mediterranean Diet for Chemotherapy: A study on cancer fatigue found that consuming a "Fatigue Reduction Diet" high in whole grains, vegetables, fruit and DAILY fish or supplemental omega 3 fish oil had better energy and sleep quality[v]. In a different study, people who started a plant-based, high-protein diet during breast cancer chemotherapy had improved fatigue, BMI and body composition[vi]. In a randomized controlled trial, people with colorectal cancer weight loss who began the Mediterranean diet with added extra virgin olive oil had improved nutritional status, quality of life, inflammatory markers, and body composition[vii].

Products recommended by Dr Green for chemotherapy:



Chemotherapy Care Package:

<https://us.fullscript.com/plans/jgreen1713648989-chemotherapy-care-package>

Healing Teas for chemotherapy:

<https://us.fullscript.com/plans/jgreen1713648989-healing-teas-for-chemotherapy>

Protein powder options for chemotherapy support:

<https://us.fullscript.com/plans/jgreen1713648989-protein-powder-options-for-chemotherapy-support>

Safe probiotics for Chemotherapy:

<https://us.fullscript.com/plans/jgreen1713648989-probiotic-options-during-chemotherapy>

Achey muscles support:

<https://us.fullscript.com/plans/jgreen1713648989-sore-achy-muscle-support-options-for-cancer-treatment-3-options>

Constipation support during chemotherapy:

<https://us.fullscript.com/plans/jgreen1713648989-constipation-support-during-chemo>

Diarrhea support for chemotherapy:

<https://us.fullscript.com/plans/jgreen1713648989-diarrhea-from-chemotherapy>

Chemotherapy friendly personal care products:

<https://us.fullscript.com/plans/jgreen1713648989-gentle-chemotherapy-friendly-personal-care-treats>

[i] <https://journals.sagepub.com/doi/full/10.1177/1534735419866920>

[ii] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37351633/>

[iii] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC10108427/>

[iv] <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC9569531/>

[v] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/27913933/>

[vi] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/36546552/>

[vii] <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/37621140/>

