

# Nutrition and Wellness With CAR T Cell Therapy

## About this Guide

This guide offers tips and suggestions that can help you make healthy choices to support your CAR T cell treatment journey. Consider bringing this guide with you when grocery shopping, preparing meals at home, and when going out to eat.



The information presented in this guide does not replace medical guidance from your healthcare team. Always talk with your healthcare provider if you have any questions about your condition, treatment, or symptoms, and ask if there are any support resources available, such as nutritionists or dietitians.

**Do not change your diet without first talking to your healthcare provider.**



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- Good nutrition is important to your recovery and healing
- ‘Eat the rainbow’ to ensure you meet nutritional needs
- Maintain a healthy diet to fit your needs
- Consider ways to lower risk of exposure to harmful bacteria
- Avoid undercooked food, such as eggs, meat, or seafood



## Wellness..... p. 6-9

- Take time to rest
- Conserve your energy and don’t overdo it
- Consider ways to stay active after your CAR T cell treatment
- Prioritize your wellbeing
- Remember to stay positive

# Nutrition

## Why Nutrition Is Important

*Good nutrition for people with cancer may differ from what is typically considered ‘healthy.’* People with cancer may need extra protein and calories to help them retain strength, and maintain proper nutrition to aid the healing process. A registered dietitian may help ensure that you are meeting your specific needs.



### Good nutrition is important to your recovery and healing.

**Your body needs fluids, and nutrients, to maintain health. Aim to drink 64 ounces of fluids in small amounts throughout the day to keep yourself hydrated.** You may want to monitor your intake to ensure it is in line with your doctor’s instructions



**Try to eat smaller, more frequent, well-balanced meals and snacks throughout the day. Setting an alarm may be helpful to remind yourself to eat**

If you struggle with lack of appetite, try eating with family/friends or watching television to keep your mind off things

**‘Eat the rainbow’ to ensure you meet nutritional needs.** The American Institute for Cancer Research (AICR) recommends a **diet rich in whole grains, colorful vegetables and fruits, and beans.** These foods have plenty of fiber, vitamins, and other nutrients, including antioxidants and phytonutrients that can help decrease risk of cancer



**Keep easy-to-eat, easy-to-prepare foods in the house or nearby while you’re resting.** Take advantage of days when you have more energy or have your care partner help to prep food in bulk



### Examples of Nutrient-Rich Foods that Are Easy to Prepare

- Yogurt, pudding, or applesauce
- Cottage cheese with canned fruit
- Whole grain cereals
- Low-sodium canned soups
- Pre-made smoothies
- Peanut butter crackers
- Trail mix or nuts
- Mashed or baked potatoes
- Pre-made nutritional drinks
- Oatmeal packets
- Hard boiled eggs
- Hummus
- Pasta salad, tuna salad, or egg salad

**Changing your diet may be difficult at first, but making small, gradual changes will help to establish good eating habits after cancer treatment**



**Your care partner and support network are here to help.** They may be able to help prepare meals that are easily accessible or shop for groceries for you as you recover

# Nutrition



## Maintain a healthy diet to fit your needs.



**If you have persistent diarrhea, nausea/vomiting, abdominal pain, or experience any changes in side effects, call your care team immediately.**

Your care team can provide individualized nutritional advice or treatment.

**During the CAR T cell therapy process, you may find that your appetite and taste for food has changed.** For example, you may:

- Not feel hungry
- Find that foods have a strange taste or no taste at all
- Feel queasy from the smell or taste of food

**CAR T cell therapy may cause fatigue that can contribute to poor appetite.**



### Examples of Nutrient-Dense Foods

- Avocados
- Olive oil or butter
- Seeds, nuts, and nut butters
- Cheeses and other dairy products
- Dried fruit
- Beans
- Meat, fish, and poultry
- Eggs

# Nutrition



## Consider ways to lower risk of exposure to harmful bacteria.

**The first step is to start with clean hands.** You and your care partner should wash hands often with soap and warm water for at least 20 seconds, especially before handling food and eating

- You may also be able to use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not readily accessible



**Choose fresh and prepackaged food** (such as those that come in a sealed box, bag, or other container) that you can make for yourself at home



*Avoid prepared foods that come from delis, buffets, salad bars, and other premade items that may have been sitting out too long.*



**Rinse fruits and vegetables well BEFORE peeling, so dirt and bacteria are not transferred onto the fruits or vegetables.** Cut away any damaged or bruised areas before preparing or eating

**Always use separate cutting boards for cooked and raw foods.** Make sure to wash with hot soapy water or place in the dishwasher after each use



### Grocery Tips

- Check the sell-by and use-by dates. Pick only the freshest products
- Be sure that packaged and boxed foods are properly sealed
- Choose unblemished fruits and vegetables
- Check that your dairy products, juices, and honey are pasteurized
- Stay away from the premade salads, meats, and other foods in the deli
- Avoid unrefrigerated cream and custard desserts and pastries
- Do not eat foods that come from self-serve or bulk containers
- Do not take any samples
- Get your frozen/refrigerated foods just before you check out at the grocery store
- Refrigerate groceries right away. Never leave food in a hot car

# Nutrition



## Avoid undercooked food, such as eggs, meat, or seafood.

Avoid eating raw or undercooked eggs, meat, or seafood by using a **food thermometer**. Thaw meat, fish, and poultry on a dish in the refrigerator, away from raw fruits and vegetables



Food	Cooking Recommendations
Ground meat and meat mixtures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Beef, pork, veal, lamb (160°F)</li> <li>Turkey, chicken (165°F)</li> </ul>
Fresh beef, veal, lamb	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Steaks, roasts, chops (3 min rest; 145°F)</li> </ul>
Poultry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All (165°F)</li> </ul>
Pork and ham	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fresh pork or ham (3 min rest; 145°F)</li> <li>Precooked ham (165°F to reheat [or 140°F for hams packaged in USDA-inspected plants])</li> </ul>
Eggs and egg dishes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Eggs: Cook until yolk and white are firm</li> <li>Egg dishes (160°F)</li> </ul>
Leftovers and casseroles	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All (165°F)</li> </ul>
Seafood	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Fish (145°F or cook until flesh is opaque and separates easily with a fork)</li> <li>Shrimp, lobster, crab, and scallops: Cook until flesh is pearly or white, and opaque</li> <li>Clams, oysters, and mussels: Cook until shells open during cooking</li> </ul>

Source: FoodSafety.gov by the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services

## Remember these food safety basics:



### Clean

Wash your hands and surfaces often



### Separate

Don't cross-contaminate



### Cook

To the right temperature



### Chill

Refrigerate promptly

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

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# Wellness

## Why Rest Is Important

*Cancer-related fatigue can develop gradually over time or start suddenly, which can often make everyday tasks difficult.*



### Take time to rest.



**Talk to your healthcare provider about how you're feeling or if you notice changes in your sleep patterns.**

It can be helpful to report how your fatigue impacts your day-to-day activities and routines



**Ensure you are getting enough sleep at night.** Try to get a continuous night of sleep instead of shorter daytime naps

**Follow a regular bedtime routine.** Try to go to bed at the same time every night, and wake at the same time every morning

- If you have trouble falling asleep, you may find listening to some music or reading before bedtime can help you relax
- Limiting screen time, including TVs and phones, at night can help you rest



**Be sure to take a break and rest throughout the day.** Try not to over do it on higher energy days to conserve your strength

- Ask family and friends for help with daily tasks and making meals
- Small modifications to how you perform daily activities may help with your fatigue. For example, sitting at the edge of your bed when getting dressed

# Wellness

## Why Activity Is Important

*It's important that you continue to stay active, though it's expected to feel tired after your CAR T cell infusion.*



### Consider ways to stay active after your CAR T cell treatment.



**Talk to your healthcare provider about appropriate physical activities.** You can work with a physical or occupational therapist to create an exercise routine that is safe for you, and to help you set daily goals



**Follow your doctor's guidance on how to incorporate regular physical activity into your routine.** Exercise and movement can help you:

- Keep your body strong and flexible
- Maintain the health of your heart and lungs
- Reduce stress and make you feel better
- Improve your sleep



### Examples of Physical Activity

- Taking a daily walk
- Gardening
- Practicing yoga
- Doing light housework



# Wellness

## Why Emotional Health Is Important

*It's common for you to have emotional challenges during your CAR T cell treatment journey and recovery.* It's very important to communicate how you're feeling with your care partner and healthcare provider. Don't let things build up or struggle alone.



### Prioritize your wellbeing.



**Talk to your healthcare provider if you feel anxious or depressed.** They can work with you to find a social worker or mental health provider who can help

**You may experience some emotional challenges that contribute to your feelings of fatigue.** These challenges can include things like:

- Anxiety
- Depression
- Grief
- Family stress
- Dealing with medical tests and cancer treatments



### Incorporate breathing exercises or meditation into your day

- Try taking 5 deep breaths using your diaphragm during a break to help increase oxygen circulating in your body
- Meditation may help improve your mood



**Use your support system.** Lean on your friends, family, or therapist if you need to talk to someone about emotional challenges you are experiencing. They are here to help you



### Examples of Ways to Stay Connected

- Spending time with friends and loved ones in person
- Talking on the phone
- Sending emails and text messages

**Seek emotional support.** In addition to having your social support system, you may want to join a support group. For some people, connecting with your spirituality may also help manage your worries



# Wellness



**Remember to stay positive.**



**Take things one day at a time.** Remind yourself that each day is a fresh start. For example, try doing something that you did not do the day before



**Break your day into smaller, more manageable chunks.** This will allow you to stay in the moment for 15 minutes at a time



**Stay mindful and focus on the present moment.** Try to leave what's past behind you, and do not let tomorrow's concerns occupy your mind

