

## How to Contact Your Registered Dietitian

Kylie Johnson MS, RD, LDN is the Cancer Center's full time dietitian dedicated to working with you to optimize nutrition and hydration before, during and after cancer treatment.

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## Nutrition Therapy at The Cancer Center



*Complete connected care<sup>SM</sup>*

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# Welcome to Nutrition Services at the Cancer Center

Good nutrition is an important component of your cancer treatment. Eating the right kinds of foods before, during and after cancer treatment will help you feel better, stay stronger and navigate the side effects of cancer treatment.

## Nutrition therapy is used to:

- Help you get the nutrients you need to maintain body weight and strength
- Replace and keep body tissues healthy
- Fight infection

As you begin cancer treatment, you will meet with a Registered Dietitian to help you maintain a healthy nutritional status and determine your individual nutrient and hydration needs. Healthy eating habits can help you deal with the effects of cancer and its treatment. Those who are well nourished may have a better prognosis and quality of life.

## The Impact of Cancer on Nutrition

Cancer can change the way your body uses food. The body's use of protein, carbohydrates and fat may be affected, especially by tumors of stomach or intestines. In fact, up to 80-90% of people with cancer have signs and symptoms of malnutrition, a condition caused by lack of key nutrients.

## Cancer treatments that affect nutrition include:

- Surgery
- Immunotherapy
- Chemotherapy
- Stem cell transplant
- Radiation therapy

Cancer and cancer treatments may affect taste, smell, appetite and the ability to absorb enough nutrients from food. Nutrition therapy can help relieve side effects, help you recover from chemotherapy, prevent delays in treatment, prevent weight loss and maintain general health.

## Types of Nutrition Care

The three main goals of nutrition therapy and care for those in active treatment and recovery are to provide nutrients that are missing, maintain nutritional health and prevent problems.

For those who cannot eat or digest normally, nutrition support can be provided. Often times, nutrition supplementation is recommended to support adequate calories, protein and key nutrients while maintaining body weight. It is best to take in food by mouth whenever possible.

Some patients may not be able to take in enough food due to complications from cancer, or their particular course of treatment. Those who are not able to take in enough food by mouth may be fed using enteral nutrition (tube inserted into the stomach or intestines) or parenteral nutrition (infused nutrients into the bloodstream).

Nutrition support can improve your quality of life during cancer treatment by giving your body the essential nutrients and energy it needs to help fight infections and maintain your strength.

## What should I report to my nurse or doctor?

It is important that cancer symptoms and side effects that affect eating and cause weight loss are treated early. Report any and all changes you may experience.

Some symptoms may include:

- Weight changes in the past year, month or week
- Changes in the amount and type of food eaten compared to what is usual
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Diarrhea
- Constipation
- Mouth sores or dry mouth
- Changes in smell, taste or pain
- Ability to walk or do other activities of daily living

