The Road to Good Nutrition

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HEALTH, HOPE & INSPIRATION
WITH REV PERCY MCCRAY
Healthy eating is a gift to yourself.

It doesn’t have to be expensive, elaborate or even tasteless. Your road to good nutrition can begin by making simple, gradual changes in your diet. But if you have cancer, your needs and tolerance can change in response to your condition and the corresponding treatments. Your cancer care team can work with you to formulate a strong, nutrient-rich diet that can help you:

- Maintain strength and vitality
- Maintain immune system
- Reduce risk of infection
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Improve tolerance to treatment-related side effects
Healthy eating includes staying hydrated.

Introduce a variety of foods and beverages that your body needs to potentially help against the fight of cancer. These include water, protein, vitamins, minerals, carbohydrates and fat. We’ll explore the functions of each and how they help you fight cancer. Remember these are only recommended amounts and may vary based on the diet you require.

- **Water** may seem an obvious choice, but water and liquids are essential to staying well-hydrated and staying in balance during treatments. While you can derive water from the foods you eat, general recommended amounts of water for most adults are eight 8-ounce glasses of water or other fluids each day. You may require more if you experience vomiting or diarrhea.
Healthy eating includes consuming protein.

Protein acts as a catalyst for growth, tissue repair, a strong immune system, and is important in making new cells, including blood cells. When your body lacks protein, it may turn to muscle tissue for the fuel it needs. People with cancer usually require extra protein to heal tissue and fight infection.

Protein can be found in poultry, lean red meat, fish, eggs, low-fat dairy products, legumes, soy and nuts.
Healthy eating includes consuming vitamins and nutrients.

**Vitamins and minerals** are found naturally in foods, helping the body to process energy (calories). It is preferable to get them from foods; however they may also be taken via supplements. Cancer treatments can sometimes disrupt a balanced diet, making it difficult to obtain essential vitamins and minerals from your food. If this happens, your oncologist or dietitian may recommend supplements based on an assessment of your nutrient intake and your type of treatment.

To safeguard against any potential counteractions with your treatment regimen, be sure to check with your cancer care team about any over-the-counter products or supplements you are taking, or are considering taking.
Healthy eating includes consuming carbohydrates.

**Carbohydrates** enable the body to save protein for use in physical activity and proper organ function. Vegetables, fruits and whole grains are the best source of carbohydrates, and they are nutrient dense and add fiber, vitamins and minerals. Work with your dietitian to determine which carb sources are best for you.
Healthy eating includes consuming fats.

Fats are vital to sustaining energy in the body. Your body breaks down fats to use them as a source of fuel, to protect the body from organ damage, act as a means of transport for some vitamins through the bloodstream and are important for cellular health. Not all fats are equal, however. When considering which fats will benefit your heart and cholesterol levels, choose foods that contain mono and polyunsaturated fats instead of saturated or trans fats.

Excellent sources of healthy fats are normally vegetable-based, such as olive, canola oils and fats found in fish, nuts, seeds and avocados. It may be best to reduce your consumption of saturated fats, like meat, poultry with skin, whole milk, cheese and butter.
Remember that these recommendations may not be appropriate for everyone. Please be advised by a licensed dietician-nutritionist who has knowledge of your medical condition and clinical plan of care by your treating physician.

Disclaimer: It is the position of CTCA that there is no scientific evidence to support nutrition modification alone can prevent or cure cancer; it is merely one of several ways to potentially reduce risk of developing cancer or side effects and maintenance of quality of life during cancer treatment, and there is still much to learn about nutrition’s overall effectiveness.

“Every time you eat is an opportunity to nourish your body.”
– Unknown
Rev. Percy McCray Jr. has spent more than 20 years ministering to cancer patients and their caregivers at Cancer Treatment Centers of America® (CTCA). He recognizes cancer care ministry as a special calling from God and considers faith a key, but often overlooked, component of cancer treatment. He now serves as the Director of Faith-Based Programs at CTCA® and provides leadership to the pastoral care staff at all five CTCA hospitals. In addition, Rev. McCray oversees Our Journey of Hope®, a nationwide cancer-care ministry training and support program.

An ordained minister, Rev. McCray is a member of the U.S. Chaplain Association. He has been recognized as one of the “most influential African Americans in Lake County (IL)” by the Chicago People’s Voice newspaper for his religious and leadership roles within the community.
Health, Hope & Inspiration is a weekly radio podcast, sponsored by Cancer Treatment Centers of America® (CTCA), designed to help people find answers to questions about cancer, cancer prevention and overall healthy living. One of the greatest gifts a person can enjoy is good health. A well-rounded lifestyle is the product of physical, emotional and spiritual health. These three things are interdependent, and that is the message of Health, Hope & Inspiration, as well as the basis of the integrative approach at CTCA®.

For more information, visit our website at www.HealthHopeAndInspiration.com.

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Cancer Treatment Centers of America® is a national network of five hospitals in the United States with expertise in treating patients who are fighting cancer. We combine state-of-the-art technologies with an integrative approach to care in order to reduce side effects and maintain quality of life during cancer treatment. If you or someone you love has cancer, call 866-712-4673 or go to www.CancerCenter.com/Faith.