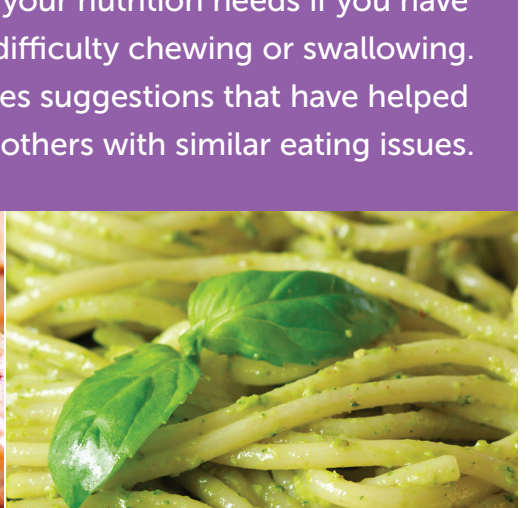


Oncology Nutrition

# Easy to Chew Easy to Swallow Food Ideas



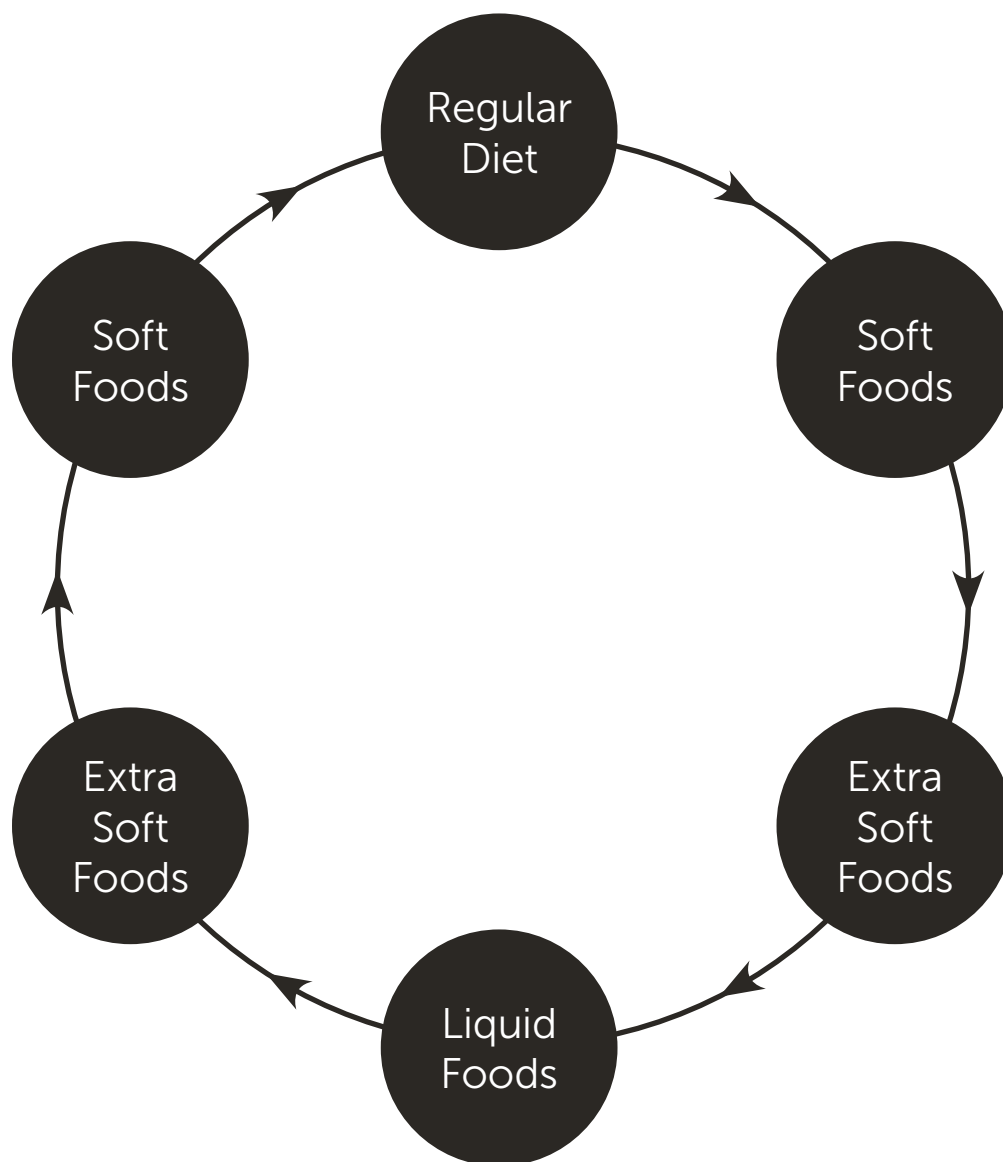
Good nutrition plays an important role in your treatment and recovery. This booklet provides ideas to help you meet your nutrition needs if you have difficulty chewing or swallowing. It includes suggestions that have helped others with similar eating issues.



The types of foods you are able to eat can vary during your treatment and recovery. It may be more comfortable to chew and swallow foods that are soft or moist.

Sometimes a liquid diet that is high in calories and protein is the easiest way to meet your nutritional needs.

The diagram below shows how the texture of your diet may change during treatment and recovery.



This booklet includes ideas for soft foods, extra soft foods and liquids. Some suggestions for maintaining weight and managing a sore mouth or throat are also included.

## Soft Food Ideas

- Cold cereal soaked in milk or cream
- Scrambled eggs, omelets or quiche
- Pancakes or French toast with butter and yogurt, fruit or syrup
- Muffins with extra butter or margarine
  
- Hearty soups with crackers, croutons, toast or roti for dipping
- Soft bread dipped in your favourite oil
- Egg salad, tuna salad, salmon salad, seafood salad or pate served on soft crustless bread or croissant
- Guacamole, hummus, nut butters or soft cheese spread on soft, crustless bread or croissant
  
- Macaroni and cheese
- Pasta with a pesto, cream, oil or butter sauce
- Perogies with sour cream
- Casseroles and slow cooker meals such as Shepherd's pie, pot pie, baked beans or stews
- Chicken à la king, creamed salmon or seafood served on noodles, mashed potatoes or rice
- Fish or seafood: poached, served with cream sauce or drizzled with olive oil
- Tender, bite sized pieces of meats or poultry served with gravy, sauces or soups
- Soft cooked vegetables served with butter, cheese or cream sauce
  
- Melon, papaya, mango, avocado or banana
- Canned fruit with yogurt, ice cream or cottage cheese
- Cheesecake or pie (fruit, cream or custard)
- Cake served with ice cream or custard sauce
- Cookies or pastries dipped in hot chocolate, latte, tea or coffee

### Soft Food Tips

- Cook foods in liquid such as broth, water or juice until they are soft and tender.
- Mix foods with butter, thin gravies, sauces, mayonnaise or salad dressing to increase calories and add extra moisture.
- Cut or mash foods into small pieces before eating.
- Add moisture to sandwiches using shredded lettuce, cucumber, marinated or pickled vegetables and other condiments.
- Add grated or melted cheese to soft foods such as pasta, eggs or soft bread to provide extra protein and calories.
- Try ready-made or convenience foods such as frozen dinners, packaged or canned foods.
- Remove the skins on fruits and vegetables if they are difficult to chew or swallow.
- Avoid foods that are dry or require a great deal of effort to chew such as bagels, tough meats, raw vegetables and fruits.
- Avoid acidic, spicy, dry and rough foods if you have a sore mouth or throat (see page 9 for more advice).



## Extra Soft Food Ideas

- Hot cereals such as oat bran, oatmeal, cream of wheat, corn meal or rice cereal
- Plain or flavoured yogurt, regular or Greek
- Soft boiled or poached eggs – try adding butter, hollandaise or cheese sauce
- Cottage or ricotta cheese
  
- Hearty soups such as split pea, bean or lentil soup, dhals, borscht, congee, cream soups or chowders (blenderized if necessary)
- Ground beef, pork, lamb, chicken or turkey cooked in gravy
- Flaked fish, flaked chicken or strained baby meats added to soups, sauces or gravies
- Mashed potatoes, carrots, turnips, yams or squash – try adding butter, cream, sour cream or cheese
- Creamed corn, mashed or blenderized vegetables
  
- Stewed, mashed or pureed fruits such as applesauce or stewed pears
- Cooked or instant puddings such as tapioca or rice pudding
- Desserts such as baked custards, bread pudding, crème brulee or mousse
- Ice cream, sherbet or other frozen desserts
- Flavoured dessert tofu

### Extra Soft Food Tips

- Cook foods in liquid such as broth, water, juice or milk until soft and tender.
- Use a blender or food processor to help soften foods.
- Mix food with butter, thin gravies, sauces or salad dressing to increase calories and add extra moisture.
- Add a beaten egg to soup or hot cereal while it is cooking for extra calories and protein.
- Stir protein powder (milk, whey or soy) into extra soft foods.

## Liquid Food Ideas

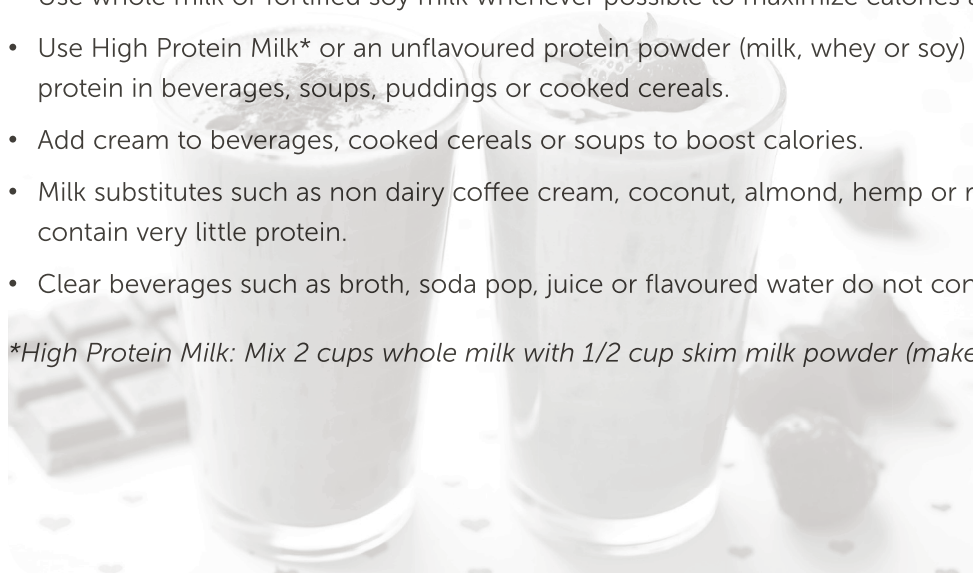
When you are not able to take any solid food, the liquids you have should be high in calories and protein. Here are some ideas you can try:

- Homemade milkshakes and fruit smoothies (see page 8 for smoothie ideas)
- Commercially prepared meal replacement drinks (ready to drink or powder made with milk), such as Carnation Breakfast Essentials<sup>®</sup>, Ensure<sup>®</sup> or Boost<sup>®</sup>
- Fortified soy milk or flavoured milk (Milk 2 Go<sup>®</sup>, chocolate milk or pasteurized eggnog)
- Creamy iced coffee or bubble tea
- Buttermilk, Kefir or yogurt drinks
- Steamed milk, café au lait, coffee or tea latte
- Hot chocolate, Ovaltine<sup>®</sup>, Horlicks<sup>®</sup>, Milo<sup>®</sup> made with milk
- Homemade or store bought cream soups such as mushroom, broccoli, chicken or tomato
- Dhal or thin congee made with fish, meat, tofu, eggs or beans (puree as needed)
- Creamsicles, fudgsicles, frozen yogurt, sherbet, popsicles and Jell-O<sup>®</sup>
- Juice, carbonated drinks, iced tea, broth, flavoured water and electrolyte containing sports drinks

### Liquid Food Tips

- Choose the PLUS CALORIES version of nutritional supplement drinks.
- Use whole milk or fortified soy milk whenever possible to maximize calories and protein.
- Use High Protein Milk\* or an unflavoured protein powder (milk, whey or soy) to increase the protein in beverages, soups, puddings or cooked cereals.
- Add cream to beverages, cooked cereals or soups to boost calories.
- Milk substitutes such as non dairy coffee cream, coconut, almond, hemp or rice milk contain very little protein.
- Clear beverages such as broth, soda pop, juice or flavoured water do not contain protein.

*\*High Protein Milk: Mix 2 cups whole milk with 1/2 cup skim milk powder (makes 2 servings).*

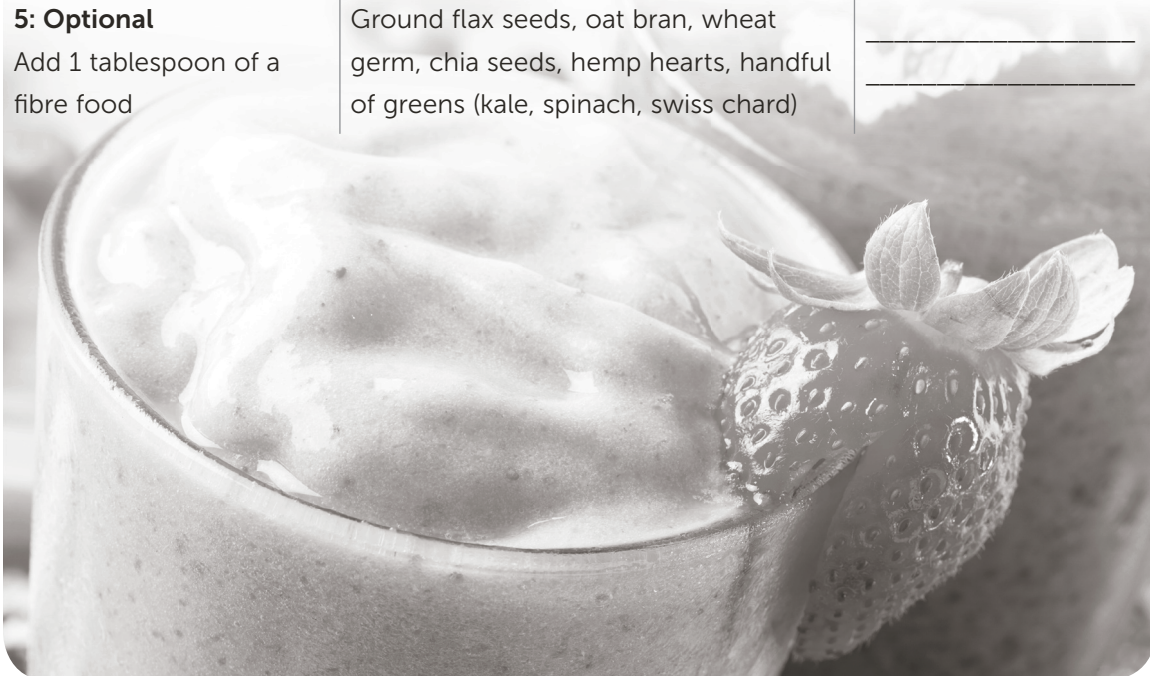


## Homemade Smoothie Ideas

If you do not feel like eating solid foods, try a nutritious smoothie instead.

Here is a simple way to make your own homemade smoothie:

Steps	Food source	Your choice
<b>1: Choose a liquid</b> Start with 1 cup of liquid	Milk, soy milk, chocolate milk, buttermilk, goat's milk, nutritional supplement drink, almond milk, rice milk, fruit and/or vegetable juice, water	_____ _____ _____
<b>2: Add protein</b> Add 2 tablespoons of a high protein food	Skim milk powder, yogurt, soft tofu, nuts, protein powder, cottage cheese, almond butter, peanut butter, egg substitute <b>Do not use raw eggs</b>	_____ _____ _____
<b>3: Add calories</b> Add a high calorie food Start with 1 tablespoon and increase gradually to desired taste	Cream, sherbet, ice-cream, condensed milk, frozen yogurt, avocado, whipping cream, vegetable oil, cream cheese	_____ _____ _____
<b>4: Add flavour</b> Add 1/4 – 1/2 cup of a flavourful food	Fresh or frozen berries, banana, canned peaches, applesauce, crushed pineapple, mango	_____ _____ _____
<b>5: Optional</b> Add 1 tablespoon of a fibre food	Ground flax seeds, oat bran, wheat germ, chia seeds, hemp hearts, handful of greens (kale, spinach, swiss chard)	_____ _____





## Suggestions to Help Maintain Your Weight

It is important that you are able to eat enough to keep up your strength and maintain your weight. Weight loss can negatively affect your treatment and recovery and is *not* recommended, even for those who are overweight. Weight loss can impact your energy level, strength and your body's ability to fight infection.

*If you are struggling to keep your weight steady...*

- Eat and drink frequently throughout the day.  
*Try having something every 1-2 hours.*
- Choose foods and fluids that are high in calories and protein.
- Limit low calorie fluids such as coffee, tea, clear broth and water, especially before or with meals.

## Sample Menu – High Energy High Protein Soft Food Ideas

<b>Time of Day</b>	<b>Food Ideas</b>
<b>Breakfast</b>	Hot cereal or oatmeal made with whole milk and topped with sliced banana
<b>Snack</b>	Homemade smoothie prepared with whole milk, yogurt, frozen fruit and protein powder * see page 8 for more smoothie ideas
<b>Lunch</b>	Tuna salad or hummus served with soft crustless bread or croissant Split pea soup drizzled with extra virgin olive oil
<b>Snack</b>	Cottage cheese or greek yogurt served with soft fruit or soft boiled egg served with sliced avocado
<b>Dinner</b>	Poached fish or tender meat served with mashed potatoes and gravy, well-cooked, soft vegetables topped with grated cheese
<b>Snack</b>	Custard or rice pudding

## Food Ideas for a Sore Mouth and Throat

Try some of these suggestions:

- Eat or drink in small amounts throughout the day instead of trying to eat large meals.
- Cut, mince or blend foods before eating to minimize chewing and ease swallowing.
- Use a straw to help get fluids past a tender or sore area in the mouth.
- Keep your mouth as clean as you can (see Mouth Care Advice on page 11).
- Ask your doctor about pain medicine or prescription mouth rinses.

**Limit or avoid** foods that may further irritate the lining of the mouth and throat such as:

- **Extremely hot or cold foods.** *Let foods and fluids cool or become lukewarm before eating or drinking.*
- **Citrus or acidic foods** such as orange, pineapple, grapefruit, tomato sauce, vinegar and pickled foods. *Substitute melon, avocado, papaya, canned pears, applesauce, fruit nectar, fruit flavoured drinks, cheese sauce, cream sauce or mayonnaise based dressings.*
- **Salty foods** such as commercially prepared soups and broths. *Try low sodium broths or homemade soups.*
- **Spicy foods** especially those made with pepper, chili powder, garlic and paprika. *Instead, lightly season foods with basil, thyme, bay leaves or oregano.*
- **Dry or crispy textures** such as toast, crackers, cookies, nuts, raw vegetables & fruits. *Soak biscuits or bread in soups or beverages. Try canned fruit and cooked vegetables.*
- **Fruits or vegetables with tough skins or seeds** such as pears, nectarines, apples, cherries, apricots, tomatoes, peas, corn, blackberries, raspberries. *Try soft peeled, canned or strained fruit and cooked mashed vegetables.*
- **Cigarettes, alcohol and mouthwashes containing alcohol.** *Try nicotine patches, de-alcoholized beer or wine, alcohol-free mouthwashes.*

## Mouth Care Advice

**Take care of your mouth, teeth and gums** to minimize discomfort and help prevent infection.

- Tell your doctor or dentist if you are experiencing any mouth problems.
- After every meal, floss your teeth and brush your gums, teeth and tongue with an extra soft toothbrush, a fluoride toothpaste and lukewarm water. *Don't forget to brush the inside surface of the teeth.*
- Try non- mint flavoured or children's toothpaste, if mint flavoured toothpastes are too strong.
- Avoid alcohol based mouthwashes as they can irritate the inside of your mouth.
- Use the mouth rinse (recipe below) before and after eating and before bed *OR* every 2 hours to help keep your mouth moist, clean and well lubricated.

### Mouth Rinse Recipe and Instructions

Mix **1/4 teaspoon of baking soda** and **1/4 teaspoon of salt** in **1 cup of warm water**.

Store in a container with a lid and keep at room temperature.

Shake well before using.

Rinse and gargle with ~1 tablespoon of rinse mixture, then spit out and repeat 2 more times.

Discard any leftover rinse and make a new batch every day.

### If you wear dentures:

- Remove and brush your dentures thoroughly after each meal.
- Rinse your mouth using the baking soda & salt water rinse (recipe above).
- Brush your gums and tongue with an extra soft toothbrush.
- Leave your dentures out as much as possible if you don't need them.
- Have your doctor or dentist check that your dentures fit properly. They may suggest that you wear them only when you are eating or not at all.

**After treatment is finished,** continue to have regular check-ups and cleanings with your family dentist.

## How to Contact BC Cancer Oncology Nutrition

Your dietitian can also help you with other eating problems through treatment such as taste changes, dry mouth, nausea or constipation.

Your Dietitian's name: \_\_\_\_\_

### **Abbotsford**

604.851.4733

Toll free in BC 1.877.547.3777

### **Kelowna**

250.712.3963

Toll free in BC 1.888.563.7773

### **Prince George**

250.645.7330

Toll free in BC 1.855.775.7300

### **Surrey**

604.930.4000

Toll free in BC 1.800.523.2885

### **Vancouver**

604.877.6000, ext. 672013

Toll free in BC 1.800.663.3333, ext. 672013

### **Victoria**

250.519.5525

Toll free in BC 1.800.670.3322

**BC Cancer website: [www.bccancer.bc.ca](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca)**

**BC Cancer Library/Cancer Information Centre: 604 675 8003**

Recipe books can also be borrowed from the BC Cancer Library/Cancer Information Centre: 604 675 8803

### **After treatment**

If you have general questions about nutrition after you have recovered from your treatments, please call the Oncology Dietitian at HealthLink BC by dialing 8-1-1.