

PRIMARY CARE 10 TOP TIPS

Nutrition for each stage of the cancer pathway: Post treatment and Recovery

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- 1 Understand and acknowledge the potentially differing expectations of patients, family and carers with regards to nutrition, which can have physical, social, cultural and emotional implications.
- 2 Aim to maintain or achieve a healthy weight (BMI 20-25kg/m²).
- 3 Consider the impact of disease or ongoing effects of treatment on nutritional status and treat symptoms for example gastrointestinal disturbances, pain, dry mouth.
- 4 Consider dietetic advice for co-morbid conditions such as diabetes, osteoporosis risk or high cholesterol. Seek specialist advice if appropriate.
- 5 If patient is maintaining weight encourage a balanced and varied diet¹.
- 6 If patient is losing weight, is already underweight or has poor appetite give first line dietary advice on food fortification²:
 - a. Swap traditional cooked meals if not tolerated for protein rich snack options.
 - b. Encourage small frequent meals and snacks which may be preferred.
 - c. Fortify normal foods with high calorie options.
 - d. Offer nourishing/milky drinks between meals.
- 7 If patient is overweight (BMI >25kg/m²) give first line dietary advice on weight loss³.
- 8 Vitamin or mineral supplements are only required in certain circumstances for example risk of osteoporosis, following total gastrectomy, pelvic radiotherapy or Whipples procedure.
- 9 If patients have ongoing problems such as swallowing, gastrointestinal symptoms, psychological issues affecting nutrition or are unable to meet their nutritional requirements consider referral to the appropriate service.
- 10 If patient has been started on oral nutritional supplements, review the ongoing need for these if weight and intake have improved since finishing treatment.

¹ Give Healthy Eating and Cancer booklet to patient

² Give The Building Up Diet booklet to patient

³ Give Managing your weight after cancer treatment booklet to patient

All patient information booklets are available to order free of charge at be.macmillan.org.uk

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