



NUTRITION

Relationship Between Breast Cancer & Nutrition

Food is not the answer to curing cancer, but it can definitely play a role. The role in supporting the treatment of it by reducing risk, supporting the body during treatment, and assisting with recovery and quality of life. Food is a huge player that we have the power to control, and it can play a pivotal role.

There are no special ingredients, foods, or diets that have been scientifically proven to prevent cancer or cure cancer. An overall well-balanced diet consisting of all the important food groups is the overarching guideline.

Does Cancer Medication Affect Nutrition?

Yes! Some medications can impact how we eat, absorb, or use nutrients within our bodies. Here are some examples. It is important to discuss any of these with your doctor, or dietitian.

Appetite Changes – Steroids, chemotherapy drugs, and antidepressants can increase or decrease appetite, leading to either weight gain or weight loss. For example, steroids can make you hungrier, whereas chemotherapy can cause nausea and loss of appetite.

Nausea, Vomiting, and Taste Changes – Chemotherapy, opioids, and antibiotics can result in some individuals experiencing metallic or bitter tastes in the mouth, feeling sick, or having aversions to smells. In this case, cold or bland foods, ginger tea, and plastic cutlery (to reduce metallic taste), can help.

Digestive Upset – Certain supplements, pain killers, and antibiotics can lead to gut symptoms such as constipation, diarrhoea, or reduced vitamin absorption. It is important to stay hydrated, eat plenty of fibre, or seek nutrition support if any of these symptoms are exacerbated.

Our six Dietitian tips to help with Breast Cancer

- 1 Eat what you can, when you can. Small snacks can go a long way when big meals are too much to handle.
- 2 Keep healthy snacks on hand
nuts, fruits, smoothies, yoghurt.
- 3 Sip fluids all day to stay hydrated, especially during treatment. Add some fruit slices into your water to add a bit of flavour!
- 4 Use herbs and spices to add flavour if food tastes bland instead of reaching for the saltshaker.
- 5 Don't be afraid to ask for help with cooking, shopping, or prepping. Consider meal delivery services!
- 6 Be kind and patient with yourself – there is no perfect diet that you must adhere to, just little modifications and tweaks to support an overall healthy dietary pattern that works for you

There are many ways a Dietitian can support you in managing a breast cancer diagnosis.

- Create a personalised plan that considers your culture, budget and lifestyle
- Managing any side effects from treatment
- Suggest nutritional supplements if needed
- Review your medications & spot possible nutrition gaps

OUR DIETITIANS ARE HERE TO HELP. TO MAKE AN APPOINTMENT
Call (03) 9560 1844 or email clinic@oscarcaregroup.com.au