

## Eating Guidelines for After a Prostate Cancer Diagnosis

Making healthy food and lifestyle choices after a prostate cancer diagnosis may help to improve your health and protect against other health problems such as heart disease, diabetes and other types of cancer. Studies suggest that a healthy diet that includes a variety of foods may help prevent prostate cancer from getting worse or returning. More research is needed before we know for sure.

This handout provides general information to help you plan a healthy diet. It also highlights those foods that studies indicate may increase or decrease prostate cancer growth.

**If you are having problems eating, have had unplanned weight loss, or having side effects from chemotherapy or radiation treatments, the information in this handout may not be the best for you right now. Speak with a registered dietitian to develop a food plan that meets your needs.**



### Steps you can take

#### Follow a plant-based diet.

A plant-based diet is recommended for men who are able to eat well and have a balanced and varied diet.

A plant-based diet is rich in:

- vegetables
- fruits
- whole grains
- legumes (lentils, beans and peas)
- nuts and seeds.

A plant-based diet does not have to be a vegetarian diet. Fish and other meats (beef, pork, wild game, poultry) and animal products like eggs can be included in small amounts.

Fill half your plate with vegetables and fruit, one-quarter of your plate with whole grains, and one-quarter of your plate with meat and alternatives at each meal. Use legumes instead of meat often.

Whole and unprocessed plant foods provide a variety of vitamins, minerals and fibre and are often lower in calories, salt, added sugar and fat. Eating mostly plant foods to meet your nutrient needs can satisfy your hunger while making it easier to stay at a healthy weight and keep you feeling well.

Note: If you have diarrhea during radiation treatments, you may need to eat less fibre. Limit high fibre foods such as in bran cereals, prunes, peels and skins on vegetables and fruit.

### **Work toward or stay at a healthy body size.**

Weight gain is common in men with prostate cancer who receive hormone treatment. Some research suggests that weight gain could increase the risk of cancer recurrence and other health concerns. A healthy diet and active lifestyle can help you manage your weight. If you have concerns about your weight, talk to a registered dietitian.

### **Limit foods high in added sugars and fats.**

Foods high in added sugars and fats are higher in calories, and eating them often can lead to weight gain. Also, they are usually low in nutrients that protect against cancer. To limit added sugars and fats:

- Drink water, unsweetened tea or coffee instead of sugary drinks like sweetened coffee and tea beverages, lemonade, fruit drinks, and pop.
- Limit fast food, convenience foods, and high fat or sugary processed snack foods such as chips, French fries, deep fried foods, baked goods, ice cream, and cookies. Keep portions small if you eat these foods.

### **Get the recommended amount of calcium and vitamin D each day.**

Hormone treatment for prostate cancer can weaken your bones. To get the recommended amount of calcium and vitamin D to help keep your bones strong:

- Eat or drink food sources of calcium every day. Good sources of calcium include milk and milk products (such as yogurt and kefir) and calcium fortified soy or other plant-based beverages.

- When choosing milk products, choose low fat (2% or less M.F.) most often.
- Use calcium supplements if you are not able to get enough from food.
- Eat or drink food sources of vitamin D every day. Good sources of vitamin D include milk, fortified soy beverage and other plant-based beverages, fatty fish, and margarine.
- If you are over the age of 50, it is recommended that you take a daily vitamin D supplement of 400 IU in addition to food sources of vitamin D.

<b>Age</b>	<b>Amount of calcium recommended daily, in milligrams (mg)</b>		<b>Amount of vitamin D recommended daily, in International Units (IU)</b>
	<b>Recommended daily intake</b>	<b>Stay below</b>	
19-50 years	1000	2500	600 IU
51-70 years	1000	2000	600 IU
Over 70 years	1200	2000	800 IU

**Learn about current food research.**

Many foods are studied to see how they affect prostate cancer. While it’s not yet proven, research hints that including some foods and limiting others may slow the growth of prostate cancer.

Foods to include:

- Tomato products such as tomato paste, sauce, juice and canned tomatoes.

- Cruciferous vegetables such as boy choy, broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower and kale.
- Healthy vegetable fats like avocados, seeds, nuts and vegetable oils such as canola and olive oil.

#### Foods to limit:

- Animal fats like fatty meat, skin on poultry, high fat dairy (higher than 2% M.F.), and baked goods made with butter.
- Red meat.
- Processed meats, like deli meat, bacon and sausage.

There is not enough research to say if eating fish, soy foods, flaxseed, pomegranate, or drinking coffee and tea makes any difference to the growth of prostate cancer. Even so, they are healthy foods, and men may choose to include them as part of a varied plant-based diet.

#### **Choose food instead of supplements.**

At this time, there is no strong research showing that taking vitamin, mineral or herbal supplements will prevent prostate cancer from getting worse or returning. Some research even suggests that supplements could potentially be harmful. For example, vitamin E and selenium supplements may increase the risk of prostate cancer for some people. Therefore, taking vitamin and mineral supplements to prevent or treat prostate cancer is not generally recommended.

If you are worried that you are not getting enough vitamins and minerals in your diet, taking a one-a-day multivitamin and mineral supplement is safe for most people. Speak with a doctor or registered dietitian first, before taking any other supplements.



## Additional Resources

For information and advice based on your specific food and nutrition needs and preferences, call HealthLink BC at **8-1-1** and ask to speak to a registered dietitian.

For additional information, see the following resources:

- HealthLink BC [www.healthlinkbc.ca](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca) – Get medically approved non-emergency health information.
- Dietitian Services Fact Sheets available by mail (call **8-1-1**) or at [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating):
  - Cancer Prevention Eating Guidelines [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating/cancer-prevention-eating-guidelines](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating/cancer-prevention-eating-guidelines)
  - Plant-based Diet Guidelines [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating/plant-based-diet-guidelines](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating/plant-based-diet-guidelines)
  - Healthy Eating Guidelines For Cancer Survivors [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating/cancer-survivors](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating/cancer-survivors)
  - Healthy Eating Guidelines for After a Cancer Diagnosis [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating/cancer-diagnosis](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating/cancer-diagnosis)
- HealthLinkBC Files available at [www.healthlinkbc.ca/services-and-resources/healthlinkbc-files](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/services-and-resources/healthlinkbc-files):
  - HealthLinkBC File #68e Food Sources of Calcium and Vitamin D [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/sources-calcium-vitamin-d](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/sources-calcium-vitamin-d)
  - HealthLinkBC File #68k Vitamin and Mineral Supplements for Adults [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/supplements-adults](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthlinkbc-files/supplements-adults)
- Canadian Cancer Society [www.cancer.ca](http://www.cancer.ca)
- American Institute of Cancer Research [www.aicr.org](http://www.aicr.org)
- BC Cancer Agency [www.bccancer.bc.ca](http://www.bccancer.bc.ca)
- Prostate Cancer Canada [www.prostatecancer.ca](http://www.prostatecancer.ca)

*These resources are provided as sources of additional information believed to be reliable and accurate at the time of publication and should not be considered an endorsement of any information, service, product or company.*



## Notes

---

---

---

### Distributed by:

Dietitian Services at HealthLinkBC (formerly Dial-A-Dietitian), providing free nutrition information and resources for BC residents and health professionals. Go to [www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating](http://www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthy-eating) or call **8-1-1** (anywhere in BC). Interpreters are available in over 130 languages.