

Nutritional Care During Cancer

- Nutrition is an important part of cancer treatment. Eating the right kinds of foods before, during, and after treatment can help you feel better and stay stronger.
- But cancer and its treatment can cause problems that can make it hard to eat.
- Not everyone with cancer has nutrition-related side effects, but this information can help you address them if and when they come up

Nutritional Requirements

Objectives of nutritional therapy

- To meet the increased metabolic demands of the disease and prevent catabolic as much as possible
- To alleviate symptoms resulting from the disease and its treatment through adaptation of food and the feeding process

ENERGY

- To prevent excessive weight loss and to meet increased metabolic demands the total energy value of the diet must be increased
- Calorie density sufficient to counter catabolic or hypermetabolic states and to support anabolism is necessary

- Of this total dietary kilocalorie value , there must be sufficient carbohydrate to spare protein for vital tissue synthesis
- For adult patient with good nutritional status about 2000 kcal will provide for maintenance needs
- A malnourished patient may require 3000 to 4000 kcal depending on the degree of malnutrition and body trauma

PROTEIN

- Additional protein is required to provide essential amino acids and nitrogen necessary for tissue regeneration , healing and rehabilitation
- An adult patient with good nutritional status will need about 80 to 100 gm to meet maintenance needs to ensure anabolism
- A malnourished patient will need more to replenish tissues and to ensure +nitrogen balance

Vitamins and Minerals

➤ Optimal intake of vitamins and minerals at least at recommended dietary allowance levels and frequently augmented with supplements according to nutritional status is indicated

FLUID

➤ fluids are increased to compensate losses from gastrointestinal problems as well as any additional loss caused by infections and fever

➤ Also sufficient fluid intake is necessary to help the kidneys rid the body of the breakdown products from destroyed cancer cells and from the drugs themselves

➤ Increased fluid helps to protect the urinary tract from irritation and inflammation

DIETARY MANAGEMENT

- Oral and other feeding modes pose fewer problems than do alternative means .
- Oral diet amplified with nutrient supplement for increased protein , kilocalories , vitamins and minerals .
- Enteral tube feeding with several routes of entry
- Parental nutrition through central and peripheral veins .
- If at all possible , normal ingestion of food with nutrient supplements as need is most desirable .
- Based on individual nutritional assesement , a personal food plan is developed with the patient , incorporating desired food forms and family food patterns .

- Often the diet of the hospitalised patient can be supplemented with familiar foods from home as the clinical nutritionist plans with the family .
- A number of adjustment in food texture , temp , amount , timing , taste , appearance and form can be made to help alleviate symptoms .
- With the support the patient and family are better able to build a positive mental attitude towards the diet as an integral part of the treatment and a means of accepting responsibility of this aspect of therapy as much as possible .
- Food should be nutrient dense .
- Texture is varied as tolerated with appeal to sensory perceptions of colour , aroma , and taste to enhance the desire to eat .

- Often a series of mini meals using a wide variety of food items is better tolerated than regular large meals
 - If appetite is better in the morning a good breakfast should be emphasised .
 - Getting some exercise before meals and maintaining surroundings that reduce stress may also help in the eating
- Process appealing in aroma and appearance and in small amounts should be continued .
- Since zinc deficiency is related to diminished taste, sometimes a zinc supplement may be indicated .
- 

Lifestyle modification to prevent cancer

- Maintain a healthy body weight
 - Reduce fat intake
 - Eat plenty of whole grains fruits and vegetables
 - Get regular exercise
 - Limit exposure to the sun
 - Avoid smoking
- 