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Nutrition as CAM Therapy

The National Cancer Institute says finding and treating nutritional problems early may improve the patient's prognosis.

In the past few decades, more and more cancer centers and physicians have accepted that good nutrition can impact the quality of life of cancer patients—and in some cases improve treatment outcomes and prognosis when deficiencies are identified and corrected.

When cancer treatment ends, you may feel out of control, and good nutrition is something you can do to help yourself. Nutrition is critically important for resuming your quality of life, but be sure the guidelines you are following are proven, check with your physician before beginning any diet regimen, and ask a dietitian to help you create a nutritious, balanced eating plan. Other recommendations:

- > Choose a variety of foods from all the food groups. Try to eat at least five to seven servings a day of fruits and vegetables, including citrus fruits and dark green and deep yellow vegetables.
- > Eat plenty of high-fiber foods, such as whole grain breads and cereals.
- > Buy a new fruit, vegetable, low-fat food, or whole grain product each time you shop for groceries.
- > Decrease the amount of fat in your meals by baking or broiling food—and when you do use oil, stick to the mono- or poly-unsaturated types.
- > Choose low-fat milk and dairy products.
- > Avoid salt-cured, smoked, and pickled foods.
- > Drink alcohol only occasionally.
- > If you are overweight, consider losing weight by reducing the amount of fat in your diet and increasing your physical activity. Choose activities that you enjoy. Check with your doctor before starting any exercise program.