

You Are What You Eat: Healthy Living With GIST

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WCRF / AICR Recommendations for Cancer Prevention

- Cancer survivors should follow the recommendations for cancer prevention!
- **DEFINITION:** Cancer survivors are not only those people who have recovered from their disease, but also those people who are living every day with a diagnosis of cancer (ALL of US with GIST).
- There exists a large and growing body of evidence showing that daily choices about diet, physical activity and weight management play a major role in cancer risk.



Recommendations for Prevention

1. Be as lean as possible without becoming underweight. (We know that **WHERE** we store any extra weight affects our cancer risk – excess fat around our waistlines can be particularly harmful.)
2. Be physically active for at least 30 minutes **EVERY** day. (Physical activity may also strengthen our immune system, in addition to helping us maintain a healthy weight.)



Recommendations for Prevention

3. Avoid sugary drinks. Limit consumption of energy-dense foods (particularly processed foods high in added sugar, or low in fiber, or high in fat).
4. Eat more of a variety of vegetables, fruits, whole grains and legumes such as beans. (The AICR recommends that we base all of our meals on plant foods – they have protective, biologically active phytochemicals, they have fiber, and they are lower in energy density.)



Recommendations for Prevention

5. Limit consumption of red meats (such as beef, pork, and lamb) and avoid processed meats (meats preserved by smoking, curing or salting, or by the addition of preservatives).
6. If consumed at all, limit alcoholic drinks to 2 for men and 1 for women a day. (For cancer prevention, the AICR recommends NOT to drink alcohol – but recognizes that modest amounts may have a protective effect on vascular disease.)



Recommendations for Prevention

7. Limit consumption of salty foods and foods processed with salt (sodium). Our daily intake of sodium should be less than 2400mg.
8. Don't use supplements to protect against cancer. The best source of balanced nourishment is a wide variety of food and drink – NOT high dose dietary supplements.



Special Population Recommendations

9. It is best for mothers to breastfeed exclusively for up to six months and then add other liquids and foods.

AND

10. After treatment and/or after treatment stabilization, cancer SURVIVORS (THAT IS US) should follow the recommendations for cancer prevention. (Caveat: these recommendations can also reduce the risk of other chronic diseases like heart disease and diabetes.)

And always remember – do not smoke or chew tobacco.



Eat Right, Stay Active, and watch your waistline!

Why Good Nutrition Now?

- Benefits of good nutrition for GIST patients:
 - Cope with aggressive treatment and its side effects
 - Tolerate higher dosage of anti-cancer therapy
 - Build a stronger immune system
 - Prevent vital tissues from breaking down and rebuild new healthy tissues
 - Maintain strength, quality of life and sense of well being



Side Effects from GIST Treatment

- Nausea
- Vomiting
- Indigestion/Heartburn
- Bloating/Feelings of Fullness
- Gas/Flatulence/Cramping
- Diarrhea/Constipation
- Fluid Retention and Edema
- Dumping Syndrome/Post-Gastrectomy
- Poor Appetite
- Taste Alterations
- Mouth Sores



Nausea

- Eat small quantities of food at any one time, but eat more frequently.
- Eat slowly and chew all foods well.
- Eat bland, lower fat foods.
- Eat slightly salty and/or sour/tart foods.
- Sip liquids that are cool or at room temperature between meals, and limit beverages during the meal.



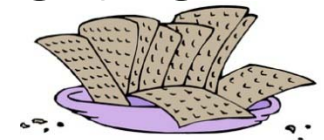
Nausea

- Let carbonated beverages sit for a while to help them “de-fizz”.
- Eat foods served at room temperature or cooler.
- Avoid foods with strong aromas, and avoid food preparation areas.
- Do not worry about getting a completely balanced diet during episodes of nausea.



Nausea

- Start the day with a few saltine crackers that you have placed at your bedside the night before.
- Try to sit upright for at least two hours after a meal.
- Loosen any tight fitting clothing.
- Open nearby windows for fresh air, or step outside and take several slow deep breaths – breathing through your mouth and not your nose.



Nausea

- Rest comfortably in a quiet, well ventilated environment.
- Consider chewing a stick of gum – keep a package of gum with you.
- Maintain good mouth care.
- Ask your physician about the use of anti-emetic drugs.



Vomiting

- Do not force yourself to eat or drink much.
- After a vomiting episode, wait approximately two hours before taking anything by mouth. Then begin sipping clear liquids every 10 to 20 minutes.
- Once clear liquids are tolerated, you can advance your diet to include full liquids.
- When the full liquids are tolerated, start to slowly include bland and dry foods.



Vomiting

- Avoid foods that are excessively sweet, spicy, greasy, fatty, rich, or overly aromatic.
- Avoid favorite foods during any time of vomiting.
- Avoid foods that are negatively associated with past episodes of nausea and /or vomiting.




Vomiting

- Avoid trying to eat in a room that is too warm or stuffy, or smells strongly of cooking or other noxious odors.
- Try to avoid unnecessary stimulation and/or excitement. Ask your physician about relaxation techniques.
- Ask your physician about the use of anti-emetic medications.



Indigestion / Heartburn

- Avoid (excessive) over-eating.
- Eat smaller meals, and have a snack in between.
- Avoid greasy, fried, and high fat foods. 
- Avoid pepper, alcohol, caffeine, and tomato / citrus or other highly acidic foods and juices.
- Do not lie down immediately after eating, and do not eat a large meal at bedtime.
- Ask your physician about an antacid medication.
- Put two inch blocks under the bed posts at the head of the bed.



Bloating/Feelings of Fullness

- Eat small meals, but snack more often.
- Chew foods slowly and thoroughly.
- Avoid greasy, fried, and higher fat foods.
- Limit milk and dairy products.
- Limit gas producing foods.
- Limit liquid intake at meals.



Gas / Flatulence /Cramping

- Chew foods slowly, and thoroughly with your mouth closed to avoid excess air inhalation.
- Avoid carbonated beverages, beer, and whipped foods.
- Avoid gas producing foods.
- Avoid milk and dairy products.
- Do not skip meals or go a long time without eating.



Gas / Flatulence /Cramping

- Avoid chewing gum or tobacco, and avoid sipping with a straw.
- Increase your level of physical activity.
- Avoid reclining immediately after eating.
- Take an OTC anti-gas agent. The active ingredient to look for is “simethicone”.



Diarrhea

- Eat small, frequent meals instead of three larger meals.
- Do not skip meals.
- Eat “plain” foods high in protein, and in potassium.
- Keep activity to a minimum, especially immediately after a meal.
- Take an antidiarrheal medication prescribed by your physician. Ask the doctor about prophylactic use of antidiarrheal agents.



Diarrhea

- Avoid foods that may irritate or stimulate the colon.
- Avoid fried, greasy, and high fat foods.
- Avoid strongly spiced and heavily seasoned foods.
- Avoid alcoholic beverages, caffeine, and chocolate.
- Avoid milk and milk products as lactose intolerance is not uncommon.
- Avoid foods that are very hot or very cold in temperature.



Constipation

- Increase fluid intake and sip fluids constantly throughout the day.
- Drink a hot beverage in the morning when you get up.
- Eat a larger breakfast.
- Increase the amount of fiber/residue in your diet.
- Consider drinking a small glass of warm prune juice before going to bed, and then again after waking in the morning.



Constipation

- Avoid heavily refined foods.
- Increase your activity level.
- Avoid the use of OTC laxatives and enema preparations unless prescribed by your physician.
- Develop a pattern of elimination.



Fluid retention and Edema

- Limit your intake of sodium to under 2000mg per day (under 700mg per meal).
- Increase your potassium intake.
- Beware of easy-to-prepare, instant, and convenience foods, fast food, and restaurant foods – these all have lots and lots of sodium.
- Increase your activity level.
- Elevate your legs when sitting down.
- Ask your physician about prescribing a diuretic medication.



Dumping Syndrome / Post-Gastrectomy

- Do not drink any liquids until 45-60 minutes after meals.
- Eat small, frequent high protein meals and snacks.
- All food and drink should be moderate in temperature.
- Do not eat meals/snacks composed mainly of only sugary/simple carbohydrate foods.



Dumping Syndrome / Post-Gastrectomy

- Do not drink much milk at first after a gastrectomy.
- Do not eat fresh fruits and vegetables if not well tolerated.
- Lie down/recline immediately after eating to slow down the time it takes your stomach to empty.



Poor Appetite

- Eat small meals and frequent snacks.
- Take full advantage of your “good days” and your “up” times.
- Choose foods and beverages high in calories and in protein. Avoid calorie-free foods (diet drinks, coffee, tea, etc).
- Stock up on “convenience” and “easy-to-prepare” meals and snacks.



Poor Appetite

- Be flexible and/or creative with mealtime food choices.
- Strictly schedule yourself to eat a small amount of food every hour of the day.
- Sip on a small glass of wine, beer, or a cocktail before meal time. Alcoholic beverages may help stimulate your appetite.
- Ask you physician about the use of prescription appetite stimulants.



Calories

- Include extra condiments with your meal that increase calories.
- Include more protein to add calories.
- Substitute water with liquids that have more calories (i.e., cream or evaporated milk).
- Serve bread at meals.
- Avoid eating a large green salad at the start of the meal.
- As with appetite stimulation, eat several times a day.



Protein

- Add one to two tablespoons of nonfat dry milk powder to beverages and meals.
- Substitute canned evaporated milk in (partial) place of fresh milk in cooking.
- Add pureed or chopped meats to gravies, soups and casseroles.
- Add sliced cheese and or grated (“Velveeta”) cheese to meals.
- Peanut butter is a good source of protein that can be added to many snacks and meals.



Taste Alterations

- Temporarily eliminate foods that no longer taste good, BUT try to keep an open mind.
- Try to eat a good breakfast.
- Substitute plastic cutlery for stainless steel and cook in oven-proof glass dishes.
- Consume both food and drink at room temperature or slightly chilled.



Taste Alterations

- Select foods **WITHOUT** strong odors.
- To mask the bitter taste of some foods, marinate them or add stronger seasonings.
- Add sugar to help tone down foods that are too salty or too acidic.
- Add salt to help tone down foods that are too sugary/sweet or too acidic.



Taste Alterations

- If you have an aversion to sweet foods, consider having more tart things.
- Fresh and pureed fruits, or peanut butter may improve the overly sweet taste.
- Place a lid on strongly smelling beverages, and drink from a straw placed further back in your mouth.
- Brush your teeth with a PLAIN baking soda toothpaste, or rinse your mouth with a baking soda and water solution before and after meals.




Mouth Sores

- Eat a higher protein diet (1.2 -1.5g/kg body weight).
- Eat small, frequent meals and snacks of bland, non-spicy, and low acid foods.
- Eat a soft textured diet: foods that are well chopped, ground, or pureed.
- Eat foods that have been thinned down by adding extra sauce.
- Dunk/soak dry foods in liquids to soften them.



Mouth Sores

- Sip beverages and thin soups with a straw.
- Keep lips moistened with a lip balm. 
- Topical anesthetics can minimize the discomfort – check with your physician.
- Avoid foods that have lots of red pepper, curry, horseradish, and hot sauce.
- Avoid foods that are highly acidic.
- Avoid very hot or very cold foods.



Mouth Sores

- Avoid dry, hard, crunchy, and coarse / grainy foods.
- Avoid carbonated beverages, alcohol, commercial mouth washes, and all tobacco products.
- Do not wear loose fitting dentures, or do not wear them at all, until your mouth has healed.
- Gently rinse your mouth frequently with a solution of warm water (1 qt.) mixed with 1 tsp. each of salt and baking soda.
- Avoid aspirin if the mouth sores start to bleed – sucking on ice chips will help control the bleeding.



Components of Improved Quality of Life Associated with Nutritional Management

- **Control of Symptoms and Treatment Side Effects**
 - Poor appetite / Anorexia / Taste alterations
 - Nausea / Vomiting / Dehydration
 - Indigestion / Bloating / Gas / Diarrhea
- **Preservation of Physical Functional Status**
 - Reduced Fatigue
 - Maintenance of Self-Care
 - Improved Mobility
- **Preservation of Psychological Function and Emotional Status**
 - Decreased Anxiety and Depression
 - Better satisfaction with Care
- **Preservation of Social Function**
 - Improved Capacity for Work and Recreation
 - Improved Ability to Interact with Family and Friends



In summary

Good nutrition can **IMPROVE** the quality of our lives in our battle for survival.

