

# Diet for cancer patients: choosing the best option

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Choosing a proper diet for patients getting cancer treatment is crucial to keep their weight and nutrition up — it is a part of overall management. Knowledge on foods is also essential for prevention of certain types of cancer.

Cancer patients during treatment experience difficulty in eating due to the side effects of powerful drug or radiotherapy. Common problems include appetite loss, change in sense of taste and smell, constipation, diarrhoea, bloating, cramps, dry mouth, lactose intolerance caused by radiation therapy, nausea, sore mouth, sore throat with trouble swallowing, vomiting, weight loss and so on.

It is particularly difficult to combat these adverse effects because cancer patient tend to develop strong food aversion that is thought to be caused by the effects of chemotherapy. So it is preferable that chemotherapy be withheld for 2 or 3 hours before and after meal. Carbohydrate and fat will be needed to provide this energy. Malnourished should receive extra protein.

High fat diet should be avoided as it is associated with cancer of the uterus, breast prostate and colon. The regular



excessive intake of calorie is associated with cancer of the gallbladder and endometrium.

On the positive side, diet rich in fiber helps to protect against colorectal cancer. Vitamin C rich food may protect against the cancer of stomach and esophagus. Vitamin A and Carotene may protect against cancer of lung, bladder and larynx. Fruits and vegetables have abundant elements that will help fight cancer. Legumes such as soybean, dried

bean and lentils may protect against cancer. High intake of soy foods is associated with a decreased risk of breast and colon cancer. Carrots, tomato and other foods, rich in carotene and lycopene may reduce the risk of ovarian cancer.

The recommendation is to eliminate vitamin A and vitamin E in supplemental form which may prevent cancer cells from self-destruction and work against cancer therapy. Some common suggestions for patients are —

- Eat those foods that you can, even if it is only one or two times
- Drink plenty of liquids
- Sip only small amount of liquid during meal
- Have a large drink at least 30 minutes before or after meal
- Avoid food and drink with smell that bothers you
- Keep your mouth clean
- Drink warm and hot liquid that can help relieve constipation
- Eat high fiber foods which include whole grain, beans, dried fruits etc.
- Eat foods and liquids high in sodium and potassium in case of diarrhoea
- Chew gums or ice cubes in case of dry mouth
- For nausea, have foods and drinks that are not too hot not too cold
- For sore mouth drink with a straw
- Avoid certain foods and drinks when your mouth is sore like citrus fruits, spicy food, salty food, crunchy food
- In case of sore, rinse your mouth 3 to 4 times a day
- Eat when it is time to eat rather than wait to get hungry

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## MEDICAL MIRACLE



This is the first report of a person regaining sight having had a detached retina for so long.

## Sight restored after 55-year wait

A man in the U.S., who was blinded in one eye 55 years ago, has had his sight restored, according to the Journal of Medical Case Reports.

The patient was eight when his retina was detached after he was hit in the right eye with a stone. When the retina is detached for a long time it can be permanently damaged, so re-attaching it might not restore vision.

Doctors said restoring sight after this length of time was a medical first.

The man was 63 when he went to the New York Eye and Ear Infirmary, saying he had pain and redness in his eye. After surgery he was able to see again.

Surgeons believe it was successful because of the low height of the retinal detachment. This is not only a great result for this patient but has implications for restoring eyesight in other patients, especially in the context of stem cell research to restore vision.

Source: BBC Health

## HEALTH bulletin

### Strawberries boost red blood cells

Strawberries boost red blood cells' response to oxidative stress — an imbalance that occurs with various diseases (such as heart diseases, cancer and diabetes) and physiological situations (birth, aging, physical exercise etc.).

A recent study carried out by Italian and Spanish researchers, showed that strawberries contain a large amount of phenolic compounds, such as flavonoids, which have antioxidant properties.

Source: Science Daily

### Chronic constipation tied to women's heart risks

Older women bothered by constipation may have a higher risk of heart disease than those who are more "regular," a large study of U.S. women suggests.

Researchers say the findings do not mean that constipation, per se, explains the extra risk. Instead, women with chronic constipation may tend to have more risk factors for heart disease — like a low-fiber diet, too little exercise and higher rates of high blood pressure or high cholesterol.

Source: Reuters

## MEDICAL PERSPECTIVE

# Right age to start schooling

PROF DR M KARIM KHAN

"Doctor when should I send my child to School?" — is a very common question that we face every day in our professional practice. And obviously it is a very important and pertinent question for the new parents. Depending upon many factors, age of schooling may vary.



Formal schooling starts in our country at the age of 6 to 7 years. Before formal schooling, pre-school education has become popular and well accepted in our society in recent times. These pre-schools, known as Kindergarten or Kindergarten (literally means children's garden), provide with a form of education for young children that

serves a transition from home to the commencement of more formal schooling.

For children who previously have spent most of their time at home, Kindergartens may serve the purpose of helping them adjust being apart from their parents without anxiety. It may be their first opportunity to play and interact with a

consistent group of children on a regular basis. Kindergarten may also allow parents or other caregivers to go back to part-time or full-time job.

However, the purpose of KG school is more or less the same. The main objectives of Kindergarten schools are as follows:

- To develop good physique, ade-

quate muscular co-ordination and basic motor skills in the child

- To develop good health habits and to build up basic skills necessary for personal adjustments such as dressing themselves, toilet and eating habits

- To develop emotional maturity by guiding the child to express, understand, accept and control his feelings and emotions

- To develop desirable social attitudes, manners and to encourage healthy group participation
- To stimulate the children's beginning of intellectual curiosities concerning the environment around them

- To encourage the children's independence and creativity by providing him with sufficient opportunities

Everybody admits that institutional education is very important and has no alternative. And pre-schools stimulate early childhood development. So we can say that our children should start Kindergarten education at the age of 3-4 years so that at the age of 6-7 years they can enter formal schools in class / standard-I. Take care of your sweet baby.

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## What to include in a first aid kit

STAR HEALTH DESK

In case of emergency, a well-stocked first aid kit could be a lifesaver. Keep one at your home, in your car and even at work.

And keep one handy if you are hiking, biking, camping or boating.

Whether you buy a first aid kit or put one together, make sure it has all the items you may need. The American Red Cross suggests a first aid kit contain: antiseptic ointment, blanket, cold pack, disposable gloves, assorted band-aids, adhesive tape, gauze pads, roller gauze, triangular bandage, hand cleaner, plastic bags, scissors, tweezers, a small flashlight and extra batteries, and activated charcoal.

Remember to include any personal items, such as medications and emergency phone numbers, or other items suggested by your doctor.

Check the kit regularly. Make sure the flashlight batteries work properly. Check expiry dates and replace any used or out-of-date contents. Store your first aid kit in a secure place, out of the reach of young children.



## Knowing for better living

### In Bangladesh ...

40,000 people are dying of kidney failure each year!

Drink plenty of water instead of other drinks

Control your blood pressure

Check your diabetes regularly

Maintain healthy weight

Eat low-fat diet

Avoid smoking & alcohol

Consult your Doctor



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