

Managing nutritional concerns: Smell aversions

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Often, cancer treatment can cause increased sensitivity to smells and odors from foods and other things in the environment. This can make eating harder since many of our favorite foods are often served warm and have some level of smell associated with them. In addition, sensitivity to certain smells can also make nausea worse, which is why it is even more important to select the right foods.¹

Tips for People Experiencing Smell Sensitivity^{2,3}:

- Consume foods at room temperature
- Do not stay in the kitchen while food is being cooked; and if available use vented fan and hoods to promptly remove odors
- Choose foods that are best eaten cold such as salads, sandwiches, salads, yogurts, cheese, cereals, nut butters, fruits, and vegetables
- Avoid foods with strong odors such as fish, eggs, red meats, foods with heavy spices, and curries

Communicate with your doctor or nurse about what you are experiencing. Contact your doctor or nurse if you are not eating or drinking, or are losing weight.

References:

1. Taste and Smell Changes. American Cancer Society.
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2. Elliot, L. Symptom Management of Cancer Therapies in Lesser M, Ledesma N, Bergerson S, Trujillo E, eds. *Oncology Nutrition for Clinical Practice*. Oncology Nutrition Dietetic Practice Group of the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics: 2013. pg 120.
3. American Institute for Cancer Research, Savor Health and LIVESTRONG. *Heal Well: A Cancer Nutrition Guide*. 2013.
http://savor.static.assets.s3.amazonaws.com/pdfs/Heal_Well_Cancer_Guide_2015-web.pdf. Accessed December 6, 2016.

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