

Cancer Nutrition Series

Genesis Medical Center—Davenport, Iowa

Boosting Calories and Protein

Why does your need for calories increase?

Calories are a measure of food energy and are present in starch, fat, and protein in varying amounts. Calories are required to maintain normal body functions and to perform physical activities. During illness, the body requires greater amounts of energy to fight infection and build new tissue and repair damaged tissues.

What roles do protein have?

Protein is used to build and repair tissues, to create antibodies to fight infection, and to assist in other bodily functions. When the diet does not contain enough starch or fat to meet the body's energy demands, protein may be used for energy. The need for protein increases after surgery, chemotherapy, and radiation therapy. When your body does not get enough protein, calories, and other nutrients, its ability to effectively fight infection and cancer is greatly diminished.

Calorie and Protein Boosters

The following are good sources of protein:

- Milk
- Cream
- Cheese
- Ice cream
- Eggs
- Peanut butter
- Nuts
- Meat
- Fish
- Textured vegetable protein
- Legumes
- Yogurt
- Butter
- Oil

If you are unable to eat enough regular foods to meet your calorie and protein needs, consider using a supplement high in protein and calories.

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Recipes

Fortified Milk

1 quart whole milk
1 cup nonfat instant milk

Pour liquid milk into a deep bowl. Add dry milk powder and mix with beater until dry milk is dissolved. Refrigerate and serve cold.

Yield: 1 cup Serving size: 1 cup Calories per serving: 211
Protein per serving: 14g

High Protein Milkshake I

1 cup fortified milk
2 tbsp butterscotch, chocolate, or your favorite fruit syrup
½ cup ice cream
½ tsp vanilla extract

Put all ingredients in a blender. Blend at low speed for 10 seconds.

Yield: 1 serving Serving size: 1-1/2 cup Calories per serving: 425
Protein per serving: 1g

High protein Shake II

½ cup whole milk
½ cup ice cream
1 envelope Carnation Instant Breakfast

Put all ingredients in a blender. Blend on medium until mixed.

Yield: 1 cup Serving size: 1 cup Calories per serving: 355
Protein per serving: 19g