

# How to navigate the holiday eating season during treatment



- Eat soft foods that are easy to chew and swallow.
- Supplement meals with snacks that are rich in protein and calories.
- Try to get a lot of calories at breakfast; this may be the most tolerable meal of the day.
- Avoid drinking fluids with meals to prevent feeling full from the fluid. Continue to drink fluids throughout the rest of the day.
- Eat in a pleasant environment with other people.

## Managing nausea

Nausea can be a very common side effect of treatment. Some things you can do to help manage nausea include:

- Avoid foods that are likely to cause nausea, such as spicy or greasy foods.
- Eat small meals.
- Slowly sip fluids throughout the day.
- Eat dry, bland foods, such as crackers, toast or breadsticks, throughout the day.
- Sit up or lie down with the upper body raised for one hour after eating.
- Avoid eating in the room where food was prepared and in a room that is too warm.
- Rinse out your mouth both before and after eating.
- Suck on hard candies, such as peppermints or lemon drops.

## Dealing with loss of appetite

Most cancer treatments can cause some degree of appetite loss, which can range from mild to severe, and can even lead to malnutrition. Usually, the change in appetite is temporary. Your appetite should return slowly once you have completed treatment. Until this happens, try some of the following tips:

- Eat small meals every one to two hours instead of the traditional three larger meals a day.
- Eat high-protein, high-calorie foods.
- Add extra calories and protein to meals by using ingredients such as milk powder, protein powder, peanut butter, butter, honey, jam, sugar, cheese and cream cheese.
- Use liquid supplements that are specially prepared with extra nutrients.
- Drink shakes, smoothies, milk and soup if chewing and eating solid food is a problem.



Your Aurora cancer experts diagnose more cancer patients than any other health system in Wisconsin. **Experience counts.** To learn more about Aurora Cancer Care, please visit [Aurora.org/Cancer](http://Aurora.org/Cancer).

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# Aurora Cancer Care Connection

Your caring connection for support during cancer care

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## The 12 steps to managing holiday stress

As the holiday season approaches, there can be increased levels of stress, anxiety and fatigue. For patients facing cancer, the holiday season can magnify the stress they experience during their cancer treatment. The holidays can bring about feelings of happiness and excitement, but also anxiety and depression. To support you during the holiday season, here are 12 ways to help you experience the holidays as they were meant to be experienced.

1. **Delegate chores and responsibilities.** Be sure not to take on extra tasks and responsibilities that someone else can be doing. And remember, no one has time to do everything, but almost everyone has time to do something.
2. **Surround oneself with a supportive network of family and friends.** It's important to spend time with people who care about you. Reach out to make new friends if you are alone during special times.
3. **Begin new traditions.** Don't be afraid to try something new. Celebrate the holidays in a way you haven't before.

Continued on page 3

We are pleased...

to launch this newsletter for you with the goal of sharing information that can be helpful and reinforcing during your cancer treatment journey. This inaugural issue comes out during the holidays with information on resources and tips to make this time as pleasurable as possible for you and your loved ones. It was developed with input from some of our expert team members in cancer care, social work, behavioral health and our many community partners. We welcome your feedback and recommendations for topics for future issues.

Sincerely,

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# Community resources

Emotional support for patients and families coping with cancer

Resource	Description	For more information
<b>Aurora Cancer Care Buddy Program</b>	The Buddy Program offers a newly diagnosed individual the opportunity to talk with someone who has had cancer.	To learn more about participating in the Buddy Program, please call 800-252-2990.
<b>Aurora Behavioral Health Services Cancer Counseling Center</b>	Individual, family and group counseling: the psychiatrists and psychologists who practice at the Cancer Counseling Center focus on the behavioral and emotional issues patients with cancer face.	To schedule an appointment, please call 414-773-4312.
<b>Aurora Cancer Care cancer nurse navigators</b>	Navigators serve as advocates, coordinators, educators and partners at each stage of the cancer journey to help ease your fears and concerns.	To request a cancer nurse navigator, please call 800-252-2990.
<b>Aurora Cancer Care cancer support groups</b>	Support groups are available for patients, family members and loved ones.	To learn more about Aurora's support groups, please call 800-252-2990 or visit <a href="http://AuroraHealthCare.org">AuroraHealthCare.org</a> .
<b>Aurora Cancer Care child life specialists</b>	Child life specialists are professionals trained in child development and who specialize in working with children of families who have been affected by cancer.	To speak with a child life specialist, please call 414-649-6634.
<b>Aurora Cancer Care Expressive Arts Studio</b>	Art therapy involves using the creative process of making art to improve and enhance the physical, mental and emotional well-being of individuals of all ages.	To learn more about participating in art therapy, please call 414-385-2708.
<b>Aurora Family Service Family Counseling Center</b>	Counseling services to help individuals and families resolve personal and relationship problems.	To schedule an appointment, please call 414-345-4941.
<b>After Breast Cancer Diagnosis (ABCD)</b>	ABCD one-to-one mentoring by trained volunteers who have already personally experienced breast cancer.	To contact ABCD, please call 800-977-4121 or visit <a href="http://abcdbreastcancersupport.org">abcdbreastcancersupport.org</a> .
<b>American Cancer Society</b>	Learn about cancer; find local support, resources and activities.	To contact the American Cancer Society, please call 800-227-2345 or visit <a href="http://cancer.org">cancer.org</a> .
<b>Cancer and Careers</b>	Cancer and Careers is dedicated to empowering and educating people with cancer to thrive in their workplaces by providing expert advice, interactive tools and educational events.	Visit <a href="http://cancerandcareers.org">cancerandcareers.org</a> .
<b>CancerCare</b>	CancerCare counseling, support groups, cancer information and education workshops.	To contact CancerCare, please call 800-813-HOPE or visit <a href="http://cancercare.org">cancercare.org</a> .
<b>Leukemia &amp; Lymphoma Society</b>	Leukemia & Lymphoma Society is the worlds' largest voluntary health agency dedicated to blood cancer. They fund lifesaving blood cancer research around the world and provide free information and support services.	To contact the Leukemia & Lymphoma Society, please call 262-785-4220 or visit <a href="http://lls.org">lls.org</a> .
<b>Stillwaters Cancer Support Services</b>	Professional, compassionate counseling and support are offered at no cost to cancer patients, survivors, families, caregivers and others.	To contact Stillwaters, please call 262-548-9148 or visit <a href="http://stillwaterscenter.org">stillwaterscenter.org</a> .

Continued from page 1

4. **Reach out to others less fortunate.** Volunteering your time to help others in need can provide a feeling of satisfaction and comfort.
5. **Learn how to relax.** You know your body best. Listen to it. Are you feeling tense? Short tempered? Tired? These are signs that the stress is getting to you. Take a minute to stop what you're doing, and take a few deep breaths to help your body unwind and your mind clear. Meditation, aromatherapy, massages, hot baths, imagery and old-fashioned sleep are a few of the many ways in which you can help release the stress and rejuvenate your body. Talk with your doctor first before trying anything new.
6. **Set realistic goals for yourself.** Try not to make this holiday season the "best ever." It isn't going to happen. The best thing you can do is keep it real, understanding that the biggest and the most extravagant isn't always the most well-received.
7. **Accept people for who they are, especially your family and close friends.** People are not going to change just because of the holidays, so don't expect them to. Just be thankful for the time you are given to spend with them.
8. **Do not be disappointed if your holidays are not like they used to be.** Remember, things change. It's important to accept the idea that every year will bring new memories and can be enjoyed in its own way.
9. **Enjoy holiday activities that are free.** Take a walk and critique the holiday decorations. Sing holiday carols with your family, or attend a holiday production at your local high school or community center.



10. **Exercise, exercise, exercise.** We've all heard it a million times, exercise helps release stress. It just may have the same effect during the holidays. Try it.
11. **Stay hydrated.** Keep in mind, by keeping our bodies properly hydrated, we are less susceptible to succumb to fatigue and burnout, two issues people seem to experience during this time of the year.
12. **If you do nothing else, you must at least do one thing. Find time for yourself!** Don't get caught up in the hustle and bustle of the holiday season. Stretch a little bit. Clear your mind. Allow your body to recover some. And keep this in mind, if you are no good to yourself, you won't be able to be any good to anyone else.

## Cancer nurse navigators



Aurora's cancer nurse navigators serve as advocates, coordinators, educators and partners at each stage of the cancer journey to help ease your fears and concerns.

Each nurse navigator is an experienced registered nurse who specializes in the care and support of cancer patients and their families. The navigator's goal is to help you every step of the way.

For more information about how your nurse navigator can assist you throughout your cancer journey, download our *Guide for Your Cancer Journey* at: [Aurora.org/CancerJourneyGuide](http://Aurora.org/CancerJourneyGuide)

To be connected with a cancer nurse navigator near you, please call 800-252-2990.