



## Decreased Appetite

During cancer treatment, it is important that you are able to eat enough to keep up your strength and help your body heal. There may be times during your treatment when your appetite is low and you may not be able to eat as much as usual. This handout provides food ideas to help you meet your nutrition needs while your appetite is low.

- Try eating small amounts more often. For example, you may eat a small serving or even just a few mouthfuls of food every 2 or 3 hours through the day.
- Eat your biggest meal when your appetite is best.
- Make every mouthful count by choosing high calorie, high protein foods and beverages.
- Sip on nourishing liquids between meals and snacks, or when you are not able to eat solid foods. Nourishing liquids may be smoothies, milkshakes, hearty soups, or nutrition supplement beverages such as Boost<sup>®</sup> or Ensure<sup>®</sup>.
- Make eating more enjoyable by finding a relaxing area to eat, putting on pleasant music, or inviting friends or family to eat with you, if you feel up to it.
- Ask friends or family to bring over meals or snacks, or to help you with grocery shopping.
- Shop for foods that don't need a lot of preparation or cooking, like pre-washed and cut vegetables and fruit, prepared desserts, or pre-cooked meats. Try ready-made or convenience foods such as frozen dinners, canned foods and soups, instant rice or mashed potatoes.
- When you are feeling well, make extra portions of meals or snacks to freeze, and use these on low energy days.
- Take food with you if you will be away from home for several hours.

**If you have tried these ideas and are unable to eat or are losing weight, ask to speak to a registered dietitian at the cancer centre.**