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### If food tastes metallic ...

- Try other sources of protein such as baked beans, legumes, lentils, cottage cheese, yogurt, milkshakes, eggs, hummus, mild fish, tuna, turkey, peanut butter or nut butters (almond, hazelnut)
- Marinate chicken, meat and fish with Italian dressing, sweet and sour sauce, lemon or pineapple juice, or sweet wine
- Try foods cold or at room temperature
- Use plastic utensils, chopsticks and glass cookware instead of metal pots, pans and cutlery
- Pair meat, poultry and fish with tart foods such as lemon or lime juice, cranberry sauce or pickles
- Use sugarless lemon candies, mints and chewing gum to get rid of the metallic aftertaste

Oral nutrition products such as Boost® Ensure® or Carnation Breakfast® can also help to meet your needs. Try them cold to decrease the flavor and aroma. You can also use them to make smoothies or milkshakes by adding fruit, yogurt or ice cream.

### Follow up with a Registered Dietitian if ...

- You have additional side effects
- Your food selections are very limited
- You are losing weight without trying

### Comments, Feedback?

Contact Patient and Professional Education

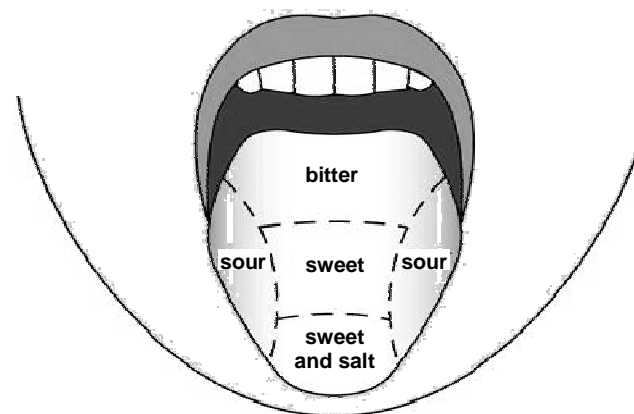
519-685-8742

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## Patient Information

# Nutrition Management of Taste Changes



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## Patient Information

### Taste Changes

Many people find that their sense of taste changes when they are having chemotherapy or radiation therapy. The extent and type of taste change varies with each person and may vary from week to week.

**Changes in taste can lead to a decrease in appetite and this can lead to weight loss. It is very important to get enough protein and calories to maintain your weight and keep your body strong throughout your treatment.**

Remember: for most people, taste changes will improve after treatment is done!

### Helpful Hints

- Choose foods that look and smell good and ignore those that don't appeal to you. Try these "off" foods again in a few weeks as you may find you enjoy them again
- Experiment with new foods and new food combinations
- Foods that need less chewing may be better tolerated as it comes into contact with your taste buds for a shorter time
- Brush your teeth and tongue often. Rinse your mouth throughout the day, but especially before and after meals with:
  - soda water or ginger ale
  - salt water (1 tsp of salt in 1 cup of water)
  - baking soda and water (1/2 tsp soda in 1 cup water)

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### If food tastes bland ....

- Add extra spices such as thyme, oregano, tarragon, garlic, ginger or cinnamon
- Enjoy strongly flavoured or tart foods like salsa, curry, pickles or cranberry. Try adding lemon juice or vinegar to foods.
- Condiments such as barbeque sauce, ketchup, mustard, mayonnaise, or soy sauce can help add flavour

### If food tastes strong/bitter ...

- Try mild foods like vanilla pudding, perogies, rice, hot cereal, mashed potatoes, custard, noodles with butter and tea biscuits
- Fresh fruit may leave a pleasant taste in your mouth

### If food tastes sweet ...

- Dilute juices and supplements with water, milk or soda water
- Try adding a pinch of salt to decrease the sweet taste in foods such as pudding, fruit, ice cream, milkshakes
- Try adding drops of lemon, lime, orange juice or vinegar to foods (unless you have mouth sores)

### If food tastes salty ...

- Try low salt and sodium reduced products
- Add a bit of sugar to foods such as soups, gravy, juices, casseroles or potatoes

Often meat or other high protein foods may taste bitter or metallic. It is important to meet your body's protein needs to support your immune system and help with tissue repair and healing.