

Post esophagectomy sample menus

With the loss of the esophagus from your digestive tract, your meals are not absorbed as they were prior to surgery. An esophagectomy often changes your preferences of food textures, serving sizes, and timing of beverages. Your surgeon will recommend a special diet so that you may be well nourished and as healthy as possible. For a meal plan to meet your specific needs and food habits, ask your healthcare team for a referral to a Registered Dietitian (RD) who works with cancer survivors. If you continue to lose weight or don't have enough energy, an RD can help you develop a healthy meal plan.

Sample menus following an esophagectomy include soft, moist, or blended foods that are neither spicy nor gaseous. Additionally, fluid intake and small meal sizes are key to being well nourished. Plan to eat six or more small meals daily. Your healthcare team may initially suggest a liquid diet with no simple sugars before you advance to soft foods, which are featured in the following esophagectomy sample menus.

At first, you may be able to tolerate only one or two foods at a meal. If dumping syndrome is an issue, sip fluids with meals and drink most of your fluids 30 minutes to an hour after solid food. Ask your healthcare team or dietitian how many calories you need daily. If you need more calories, add more spreads, sauces, protein, and nutrition supplements between meals. Because every cancer survivor is different, work closely with your team to follow their nutrition instructions.

Learn more about eating well after an esophagectomy on [LLSnutrition.org](https://www.bloodcancerunitednutrition.org).

Post esophagectomy sample menu: day 1

MEAL	SUGGESTED ITEMS	NOTES
BREAKFAST Calories 300	1 egg, scrambled 1 slice toast, whole-wheat 2-4 oz. grape juice 2 tsp. canola oil or margarine 2 tsp. jelly	Stir a scoop of protein powder into eggs for extra protein. Use vitamin C fortified juice.
MORNING SNACK Calories 410	1/2 cup applesauce <u>Between Meals:</u> 8 oz. high-calorie liquid nutrition supplement water	Choose liquid supplements that say "very high calorie" or "plus."
LUNCH Calories 300	1/2 cup casserole with shredded chicken and chopped vegetables 1 slice whole-wheat toast 2 tsp. vegetable oil or margarine 2-4 oz. plum juice 4 oz. creamy yogurt or lactose-free	Make the casserole very moist. Finely chop the vegetable pieces. Use more margarine if tolerated. If lactose intolerant, use lactose-free yogurt and milk.
AFTERNOON SNACK Calories 250	1/2 small banana <u>Between Meals:</u> 4 oz. high-calorie liquid nutrition supplement	Add a scoop of protein powder to your beverage for extra protein.
DINNER Calories 330	2 oz. lean ground beef patty, moist 1-2 Tbsp. gravy on meat 1/3 cup mashed potatoes 1 dinner roll 2-4 oz. vegetable juice 2 tsp. canola oil or margarine	Add a scoop of protein powder to potatoes if needed. Look for vitamin C fortified juice.
EVENING SNACK Calories 490	1/2 English muffin, toasted 1/2 Tbsp. peanut butter, smooth <u>Between Meals:</u> 8 oz. high-calorie liquid nutrition supplement water	Use smooth nut butters. Freeze the liquid supplement beverage in a cup for a treat that tastes like ice cream.

Post esophagectomy sample menu: day 2

MEAL	SUGGESTED ITEMS	NOTES
BREAKFAST Calories 350	½ cup cooked oatmeal, moist 1 slice toast, whole-wheat 2-4 oz. cherry juice 2 tsp. canola oil or margarine 2 tsp. jelly	Stir a scoop of protein powder into oatmeal for extra protein. Use vitamin C fortified juice.
MORNING SNACK Calories 410	½ cup fruit cocktail <u>Between Meals:</u> 8 oz. high-calorie liquid nutrition supplement water	Choose liquid supplements that say “very high calorie” or “plus.”
LUNCH Calories 325	1/2 cup macaroni and cheese, moist 1/2 English muffin, toasted 2 tsp. canola oil or margarine 2-4 oz. vegetable juice	Use more margarine if tolerated. Use vitamin C fortified juice.
AFTERNOON SNACK Calories 250	2 soft pear halves, canned 2-4 oz. lemonade, low-sugar <u>Between Meals:</u> 4 oz. high-calorie liquid nutrition supplement water	Add a scoop of protein powder to beverage for extra protein.
DINNER Calories 300	½ cup dried beans, moist 1/3 cup rice, brown 1 dinner roll 1 Tbsp. gravy, oil, or margarine 2-4 oz. tea, low-sugar	Add a scoop of protein powder to beans if needed. Look for vitamin C fortified juice.
EVENING SNACK Calories 520	1 cup yogurt 2-4 oz. juice <u>Between Meals:</u> 8 oz. high-calorie liquid nutrition supplement water	If lactose intolerant, try tofu yogurt. Freeze the liquid supplement beverage in a cup for a treat that tastes like ice cream.

Post esophagectomy sample menu: day 3

MEAL	SUGGESTED ITEMS	NOTES
BREAKFAST Calories 350	1/2 cup cooked hot cereal 1 slice toast, whole-wheat 2-4 oz. apple juice 2 tsp. canola oil or margarine 2 tsp. jelly	Stir a scoop of protein powder into cereal for extra protein. Use vitamin C fortified juice.
MORNING Calories 410	1/2 cup pear sauce Between Meals: 8 oz. high-calorie liquid nutrition supplement water	Choose liquid supplements that say "very high calorie" or "plus."
LUNCH Calories 325	1/2 cup tuna salad with shredded tuna and chopped boiled egg 1 slice toast, whole-wheat 1 Tbsp. salad dressing or mayonnaise 2-4 oz. vegetable juice 4 oz. creamy yogurt, lactose-free	Make tuna salad very moist. Use more salad dressing or mayonnaise if tolerated. If lactose intolerant, use lactose-free yogurt and milk.
AFTERNOON SNACK Calories 420	1/2 cup canned pineapple tidbits 2-4 oz. low-sugar lemonade Between Meals: 8 oz. high-calorie liquid nutrition supplement water	Add a scoop of protein powder to beverage for extra protein.
DINNER Calories 300	2 oz. ground turkey, moist 1-2 Tbsp. gravy on meat 1/3 cup cooked pasta with cheese 1 dinner roll 1 Tbsp. oil or margarine 2-4 oz. tea, low-sugar	Add a scoop of protein powder to potatoes or tea if needed.
EVENING SNACK Calories 520	1 soft high-nutrition bar 2-4 oz. lemonade, low-sugar Between Meals: 8 oz. high-calorie liquid nutrition supplement water	Instead of lemonade, make gelatin with your favorite juice for variety. Freeze the liquid supplement beverage in a cup for a treat that tastes like ice cream.