

General Dietary Suggestions

People with neuroendocrine tumors (NETs) often have unique nutrition needs. Eating a balanced diet will help your body function at its best. The table below provides ways you can help reduce NET symptoms (such as diarrhea and gas), receive sufficient nutrients and maintain an adequate weight.

	Proteins & Carbohydrates	Fat	Vitamins & Minerals	Fiber
What do I need to know?	<p>Patients with NETs tend to have low levels of an essential amino acid called tryptophan, which is found in complete proteins. Proteins can help repair tissue, keep the immune system healthy, and provide energy</p>	<p>Fatty foods can make diarrhea worse</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patients with NETs may have niacin deficiency; signs of a niacin deficiency include, scaly rash on skin, canker sores, indigestion, depression, fatigue Fruits and vegetables are a great source of vitamins and minerals, but many people may find them hard to digest 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patients with constipation or irregular stools should eat foods that are high in insoluble fiber. Insoluble fiber may help move food through the digestive system Patients with diarrhea should eat foods that are high in soluble fiber. Soluble fiber may help slow the movement of material through the digestive system
What can I do?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> At each meal, eat a good source of protein, in addition to carbohydrates, to maintain your health and energy Good protein sources include lean meats, poultry without skin, seafood, egg whites, beans, lentils, tofu, tempeh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limit the amount of high-fat food you eat each day Choose healthy fats in moderation; healthy fats include avocado, nuts, seeds, olive oil, canola oil 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boiled, mashed, or pureed fruits and vegetables may be easier to digest Foods high in niacin are meats poultry, fish, cereal, grain products It may be helpful to take standard vitamin and mineral supplements*, in addition to eating a varied diet 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insoluble fiber: whole wheat, whole grains, nuts, brown rice, some fruits and vegetables, such as berries, figs, squash Soluble fiber: oatmeal, oat cereal, oat bran, some fruits and vegetables, such as artichoke, grapefruit

*Always consult with your physician before taking any over-the-counter medicines or remedies, making any changes to your diet, or engaging in any physical activity. Consult with your physician if you believe you have a niacin deficiency.



Relieving Gastrointestinal Symptoms

People with NETs can experience different symptoms, depending on their type of NET. The table below shows some dietary changes you can make that may help relieve common symptoms. It also shows some foods to avoid that may trigger symptoms.

To relieve diarrhea	To relieve constipation	To relieve gas and bloating abdominal pain	Foods that may trigger symptoms (such as flushing, diarrhea)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drink plenty of water and fluids ▪ Eat small meals frequently ▪ Try a diet of starchy, easily digestible carbohydrates and low-fat foods ▪ Avoid: foods high in fiber, fatty, spicy, and sugary foods; bran; raw fruits and vegetables; nuts; dairy products; caffeine ▪ Avoid: acidic drinks (carbonated drinks, citrus juices, tomato juice), alcohol, milk, caffeine ▪ Consult with your doctor before using anti-diarrheal medicine* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Drink plenty of water and fluids ▪ Eat foods high in fiber, such as raw fruits, vegetables; whole-grain breads and cereals; dates, apricots, raisins, and prunes; nuts ▪ Drink prune juice, coffee, tea ▪ Exercise moderately* ▪ Avoid: gassy foods (broccoli, cabbage) and foods that cause constipation (cheese, eggs) ▪ Consult with your doctor before using stool softeners or laxatives* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Eat small meals frequently ▪ Avoid: gassy foods (broccoli, cabbage, cauliflower, onion, leeks) ▪ Avoid: foods high in fiber, fatty and spicy. ▪ Avoid: caffeine, carbonated drinks, and alcohol 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Large meals ▪ Alcohol ▪ Tomato-based dishes ▪ Fatty foods ▪ Spicy foods ▪ Caffeine (coffee, chocolate, colas, tea) ▪ Nuts, (specifically walnuts, peanuts, coconuts, Brazil nuts) ▪ Some raw fruits and vegetables (pineapple, raspberries, banana , avocado) ▪ Dairy products ▪ Aged cheeses, cured meats, pickled foods ▪ Smoked, salted or pickled fish or meat (herring, salami, sausage, corned beef, bologna, pepperoni)

*Always consult with your physician before taking any over-the-counter medicines or remedies, making any changes to your diet, or engaging in any physical activity.



If you are a St. Luke's patient, you may schedule a free nutrition counseling session before, during or after cancer treatment with an oncology specialist. For an appointment, contact the Cancer Center Nutrition clinic at 832-355-2086.