

Kidney Disease, Appetite and Eating

“Plan regular meal and snack times and stick to your planned times.”

People in the later stages of CKD and especially those on dialysis, often experience eating problems related to poor appetite, altered taste, feeling full or feeling too tired to eat or prepare meals. Here are some tips you can use if you have problems with your appetite or with eating.

Poor Appetite

- Try to eat 4-6 small meals every day, even if you are not hungry.
- Cool or cold foods might taste better.
- Eat protein-based foods such as meat, chicken, fish and eggs first.
- Make foods visually appealing.
- Use supplements (Ensure[®], Boost[®], Nepro[®], etc.), if needed.
- If you are on dialysis, come to all of your dialysis treatments and stay for your entire treatment.
- Do not fill up on liquids with your meals. Drink fluids slowly between meals or snacks.

Strange Taste to Food or No Taste

- Try other protein foods besides beef and pork.
- Marinate meat, fish and chicken in salt-free marinades.
- Try cold foods, such as chicken salad, egg salad or tuna salad.
- Brush your teeth regularly and rinse with a refreshing mouthwash.
- Use herbs and spices to add flavor to food.
- Talk to your dietitian for ideas on seasoning food without using salt.
- Talk with your doctor, nurse and dietitian for other helpful ideas.

Feeling Full Too Fast

- Try to eat 5 or 6 small meals or snacks during the day.
- Eat high-protein food, such as meat or eggs, first.
- Take your time eating.
- Take breaks during meals.
- Chew slowly and well.
- Avoid high-fat foods, fried foods and rich sauces.
- Save liquids for after meals.
- Sip liquids between meals.
- Plan regular meal and snack times and stick to your planned times.



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“Eat your biggest meal at the time of day that you have the most energy.”

Too Tired To Eat

- Eat well on your “good” days.
- Eat your biggest meal at the time of day that you have the most energy.
- Prepare and freeze meals ahead of time.
- Use low-sodium, convenience and ready-to-eat foods that fit within your meal plan.
- Let friends or relatives help you.
- Try Meals on Wheels or similar home-delivered meal services.
- Keep high-protein snacks on hand.
- Get eight hours of sleep each night.