



Integrative Therapies Program for  
Children with Cancer  
Herbert Irving Cancer Center, 7<sup>th</sup> Floor

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## COPING WITH TASTE CHANGES

### General Guidelines that help:

- Serve different foods, flavors and textures. Change the atmosphere of foods by eating in different rooms of house, creating themes around foods, or going for picnics. Alternatively, try foods from different ethnicities.
- Temperature affects flavors of foods. Your child may like foods at cooled or room temperature, not hot. Experiment with temperatures that please your child's senses.
- Citrus, tart, and spicy foods may allow your child to taste better. Be careful not to use this guideline if your child has mouth sores.
- Eliminate any offending foods until this segment of therapy has passed. You do not want your child to create an aversion to foods they are normally willing to eat.
- Bitterness- Cooking on ovenproof glass dishes instead of metal pots may alleviate the bitter taste of foods. Use plastic or wooden serving pieces and utensils. Avoid metal use in cooking and eating.

### Foods that may help:

- Prepare dishes with strong and flavorful herbs/seasonings. Some flavorful herbs/seasonings are: basil, rosemary, garlic, onion, mint, soy, mustard, lemon, oregano, nutmeg, cinnamon, and fruit zests.
- Lemon, mint, fruit flavored hard candies or rinsing child's mouth with water may rid any persistent bad tastes or flavors. These also may help alleviate any metallic tastes in the mouth. Try sucking on them before meals or after meals to clear the tastes out of the mouth. (Use should be limited if suffering from diarrhea).
- Use sweeteners to add flavor to foods. Use of honey, jam, or sugar may help. The sugar may help override any bitter or metallic taste your child is incurring.
- Marinate meats with seasonings/spices/fruit juices, soy sauce, sweet & sour sauce, BBQ sauces in order to change/add the flavor.
- Adding salt to food helps to decrease the sweetness of foods.
- Adding sugar to foods can help decrease the acidity & saltiness & bitterness of foods.
- If protein is bothering your child, you can substitute red meat with other high-protein foods such as, chicken, turkey, eggs, cheese, nuts, beans and milk products.