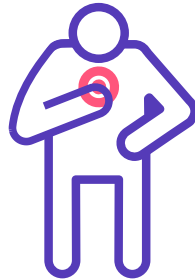
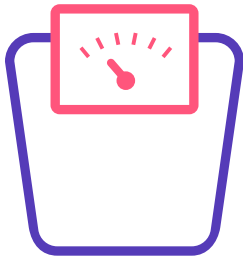


# Do you have problems digesting your food?

The pancreas makes enzymes which help to break down food. This is part of digestion. Pancreatic cancer and surgery to remove the cancer can cause problems with digestion.

You might get some of these symptoms:

- losing your appetite
- losing weight, or struggling to put weight back on
- indigestion or heartburn
- runny poo (diarrhoea)
- finding it harder to poo (constipation)
- pale, oily, floating poo (steatorrhoea)
- tummy pain or discomfort
- bloating or wind
- feeling full up quickly
- feeling sick
- needing to poo quickly, especially after eating



If you have pancreatic cancer and have these symptoms, you may need to take capsules. These replace the enzymes your pancreas normally makes.

These are called **pancreatic enzyme replacement therapy (PERT)**. Common brands are Creon<sup>®</sup>, Nutrizym<sup>®</sup> and Pancrex<sup>®</sup>. Your doctor can prescribe them.

You take these capsules when you eat. They help digest your food.

They can:

- help you manage your symptoms
- help you to cope better with treatments, such as chemotherapy or surgery
- make a big difference to how you feel.

If you have any problems with digestion or questions about PERT, speak to your doctor, nurse or dietitian.

# How to take PERT

There is no set dose. You might start with two or three capsules (50,000 or 75,000 units) for a meal, and one or two capsules (25,000 or 50,000 units) for a snack or milky drink. You may need to increase this.

## ✓ Do

- Take PERT with all meals, snacks and milky drinks.
- Swallow the capsules whole, with a couple of sips of a cool drink.
- Take half with the first mouthfuls of food. Take the rest during the meal.
- Take as many as you need. If you still have symptoms, try taking more PERT next time you eat.
- Have more for bigger meals or food with more fat in it.
- Take PERT with nutritional supplements, if you use them.

## ✗ Do not

- Do not chew the capsules. This can cause a sore mouth.
- Don't worry if you forget to take PERT with a meal or snack. Just take the usual amount next time.
- Do not keep PERT in hot places. Heat can stop it working properly.
- You don't need to take PERT if you are not eating or drinking. It only works with food.

Pancreatic  
Cancer  
UK




Do you  
have  
problems  
digesting  
food?



## Support with diet and PERT

Speak to our specialist nurses on our free Support Line. They can explain how to manage symptoms, and answer your questions.

We also have more information about digestion and PERT, and a food diary to help you use PERT, at:

 [pancreaticcancer.org.uk/diet](https://pancreaticcancer.org.uk/diet)

We provide lots of support for you and your family, including webinars and support sessions. To find out more, go to:

 [pancreaticcancer.org.uk/support](https://pancreaticcancer.org.uk/support)

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Our specialist nurses

Speak to our specialist nurses for support with pancreatic cancer.

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