

## Taste Changes

Sometimes when you have an infection or are taking certain medications, common foods can taste bitter or metallic or your taste buds might seem particularly sensitive. Here are some things to try to make foods taste better:

- Marinate (soak) foods in soy sauce, fruit juice, wine, Italian dressing, commercially made marinade, or sweet and sour sauce.
- Use sugar to tone down salty or acidic foods or use salt to tone down sweet foods.
- Try more or stronger seasonings in cooking such as basil, oregano, rosemary, tarragon, lemon or lime juice, garlic, or mint.
- Try using bacon, ham, garlic or onion to add flavor to dishes.
- While your taste is “off,” avoid having your favorite foods so you don’t develop an aversion to them or begin to associate them with a bad taste.
- If red meat tastes particularly bitter or metallic to you, substitute other protein-rich foods like chicken, eggs, dairy products, fish, custard, milkshakes, peanut butter, peas, beans (pinto, kidney, garbanzo, etc.), nuts, or macaroni and cheese.
- Try tart foods like orange, cranberry, or pineapple juice, pickles, lemons, lemonade, lemon juice, vinegar, or tart lemon yogurt to overcome a metallic taste and enhance a dulled taste.
- Experiment with eating hot foods chilled or cold foods at room temperature or even warm.
- Use cold foods like sorbet, sherbet, fruit ice, ice chips, or ice cream to numb your taste buds.
- Using plastic forks and spoons may help if you are particularly bothered by metallic tastes.
- Try rinsing your mouth with one teaspoon of baking soda in one cup of warm water. Swish it around (don’t swallow!) for about a minute (sing the “Row, row, row your boat” song 3–4 times).
- Use a soft bristle toothbrush for cleaning your teeth and tongue before and after you eat. You may want to try special toothpaste and mouthwashes made for people who have dry or sore mouths to help reduce mouth pain. Products that don’t contain alcohol, as it tends to be quite drying, are recommended.