

Food First

Practical advice for adults with a small appetite and weight loss

Tips to increase your food and drink intake and to improve the calorie, protein and nutrient content of your diet. Suitable for relatives and carers of adults in the community with small appetite and weight loss.

Eating and Drinking During Illness

During an illness and whilst recovering, it is important to eat a diet that is as nutritious as possible.

If you have lost your appetite or experienced weight loss, eating well will help you to: -

- Fight infections
- Heal well
- Prevent further weight loss
- Feel stronger, brighter and more energetic
- Get all the nutrients your body needs

Food Fortification

Food can be fortified so that it contains more calories and protein.

- Add sugar, jam or honey to breakfast cereals, puddings and drinks
- Add grated cheese, cream or butter to potatoes, vegetables, soups or sauces.
- To puddings add extra cream, sugar, evaporated milk or ice cream
- Salad cream and mayonnaise are good with cooked meals and sandwiches.
- Add extra butter to vegetables and drizzle salads with olive oil or dressing
- Use fortified milk on breakfast cereals and add extra dried fruit and nuts

Fortified Milk

To 1 pint of whole (full cream) milk add 4 tablespoons skimmed milk powder. Try to take 1 pint of fortified milk per day. Keep in a jug in the fridge and add to soups, sauces, puddings and milky drinks.

For a balanced diet, try to include these foods each day:

- 1 pint milk (fortified if possible)
- Protein foods – meat, chicken, fish (especially oily fish e.g. sardines, pilchards, kippers, salmon), cheese, eggs, nuts and beans and pulses. Try to include in 2 meals each day.
- Starchy foods – bread, breakfast cereal, potato, rice, pasta. Include at each meal time.
- Fruit and Vegetables – aim for at least 3 portions per day.
- Include a milk based pudding each day – rice pudding, custard or yogurt.



How to improve your intake

- Small and frequent meals and snacks are often easier to manage than large meals. Aim to eat 3 small meals a day with 2-3 snacks in-between.
- Avoid drinking with or just before meals as this may fill you up. It's still important to drink 6-8 mugs of fluid a day. Try fruit juice, smoothies or milky drinks for extra goodness rather than water, squash or tea
- Avoid 'low fat', 'low sugar' or 'diet' products.
- Try nourishing drinks such as Meritine or Complan. These are also available in soup flavours sometimes called Meretine and are more nourishing than most tinned or packet soups.
- Ask relatives or friends to help with shopping or cooking occasional meals. You may need more support from a regular carer to help with these tasks.

How to improve your intake cont...

- Meals-on-wheels or home-delivered frozen ready meals can be tasty and useful if cooking is difficult at home.
- Have convenient ready meals e.g. dried pasta with sauce, frozen meals, tinned stew in the cupboards for the times when you don't feel like cooking.
- Go for the foods you fancy most.
- Start off with small portions. You can always have seconds or a pudding after.

Quick and easy meal ideas

- Jacket potato with butter, baked beans and grated cheese or with mayonnaise or tinned mackerel in tomato sauce.
- Cauliflower or macaroni cheese with peas and bread and butter.
- Baked beans on toast with grated cheese and a tomato.
- Corned beef hash.
- Tinned soup, with grated cheese and cream, roll and butter.
- Bowl of cereal with fortified milk, honey and dried fruit or sliced banana.
- Lasagne (ready cooked) with salad and garlic bread.
- Cheese or ham omelette with a tomato and bread and butter.
- Sardines on toast
- Boil in the bag fish with parsley sauce, peas and bread and butter
- Tinned stew or chilli with fortified mashed potato and vegetables.

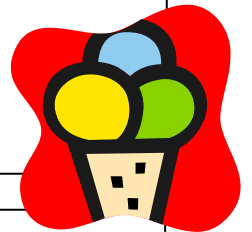


pudding Ideas

Choose yoghurt, creamy pot desserts, trifles, cheesecakes. Choose whole milk or luxury types instead of 'low-fat' or 'diet' types.

Add nuts and dried fruit, jam or honey.

- Rice pudding with cream
- Milk jelly or blancmange - (use fortified or evaporated milk)
- Luxury ice-cream with fresh or dried fruit and honey or chocolate sauce
- Cake and cream, ice-cream or custard
- Banana custard
- Stewed or tinned fruit with custard, cream or ice-cream
- Cheese with crackers and apple



Snacks

- Milky Drinks e.g. Coffee, hot chocolate, Ovaltine or Horlicks made with fortified milk
- Biscuits or cake
- Crackers with butter and cheese or pâté
- Breakfast cereal with fortified milk
- Yoghurt or fromage frais (whole milk or luxury)
- Toast with butter and peanut butter, Marmite, sardines or pâté.
- Nuts or dried fruit (e.g. raisins, dried apricots), chocolate
- Scone, toasted teacake or crumpet with butter and jam or honey
- Boiled egg with bread and butter

If you have diabetes it is OK to have some sugary foods. However, try to eat more savoury foods first.

If you are having difficulty chewing or swallowing, or are continuing to lose weight, ask your doctor to refer you to a dietitian or speech therapist.

Dietitian.....
Telephone.....
Date Given.....