



Making the Most of your Food

Advice for adults who have a poor appetite or have lost weight

Introduction

- It is important to try and eat well so that you will be stronger and more able to recover or cope with your illness or treatment.
- If you have a poor appetite or have lost weight, changes to your diet could make a difference.
- Try small frequent meals and snacks to boost your appetite. This leaflet will give you ideas as to how you can do this.
- If you have diabetes, some of the suggested foods will increase your blood glucose levels. However, if your appetite is poor and you need to gain weight, it is important that you focus on eating well and having snacks – try to choose the high fat suggestions and limit the amounts of sugary snacks. Monitor your blood sugar levels carefully and if you are concerned please discuss with your GP or diabetes team
- If you are on a special diet, this information may not be appropriate for you. Please ask your doctor or GP to refer you to a dietitian if you need advice about gaining weight on a special diet or for additional support with your diet.

Helpful Hints to try to Increase your Appetite

- Have your main meal at the time of day you feel most well.
- Keep a store cupboard of easily prepared foods e.g. tinned meats and fish, UHT milk, evaporated milk and fruit juice, dried mashed potato, packet soups, instant puddings.
- Avoid stressful mealtimes – it is understandable for you and your family to be concerned if you are not eating well however “little and often” is the key
- If you feel full easily, try taking drinks along with or after your meal
- If you are finding cooking difficult try using convenience / ready prepared meals, or try cold foods if the smell of cooking is putting you off eating

Increasing Calories and Protein

- Try to have protein foods such as meat, fish, egg, cheese, beans, lentils, nuts, dhal, quorn or tofu at least 3 times a day.
- Use 1-2 pints of full cream milk or enriched milk (see following page) every day. Use in drinks, soups, sauces, puddings, lassi and on cereals.
- Try to have a pudding once or twice a day, e.g. thick & creamy yogurts, tinned rice pudding, sponge pudding and custard, trifle, mousse, fruit pie, crumbles, kheer (sweet rice).
- Include sugary foods whenever you can, e.g. sugar, jam, honey, sweets, chocolates, biscuits, cakes, sweetmeats.
- Fry or add fat to food as often as possible, e.g. potatoes, vegetables, eggs, rice, fish, meat, bammie (Jamaican bread), paratha or bhatura or puri (Asian bread)

Information for Patients

- To breakfast cereals try adding: Dried fruit, nuts, cream, yogurt, honey, bananas
- To potatoes try adding: cream, grated cheese, full fat fromage frais, cooked bacon/ham/ corned beef/ tinned fish.
- To sauces try adding: cheese, cream, milk powder, ghee, butter/margarine, peanut butter
- To soups try adding: grated cheese, croutons, dumplings, noodles/pasta, cream, milk powder
- To vegetables try adding: butter/margarine, cheese/parsley sauce
- To salad try adding: salad dressing/ mayonnaise, olives / nuts/seeds, chopped hard boiled egg

Snack Ideas

- Glass of full fat/ enriched milk/ milkshake with a biscuit/ cake
- Peanuts/mixed nuts with raisins
- Crackers or digestive biscuits and spreading cheese or cream cheese
- Chocolate bar, cake or other sweets
- Mini pork pie/ sausage roll
- Toast/ crumpet with butter and jam
- Individual desserts e.g. thick and creamy yoghurt/ chocolate mousse/ trifle
- Fried dumplings/ plantain
- Crackers and avocado pear
- Samosa/ Pakora

If you are only managing small meals, ensure you take snacks in addition and in-between!

Ideas for Breakfast

- Cereal with full fat or enriched milk (see 'increasing calorie and protein section for topping ideas')
- Toast/ croissant/ butter muffins/ crumpet/ mini pancakes with butter or jam
- Scrambled egg/ bacon/ sausage with a roll/ on toast
- Glass of full fat/ enriched milk with biscuits

If you can manage even a little breakfast it helps you to eat better for the rest of the day!

Ideas for Light Meals

- Toast with scrambled egg, cheese, baked beans, spaghetti, sardines, bacon, sausage
- Sandwich/ roll with cheese, egg mayonnaise, tuna mayonnaise, meat, pate
- Omelette with grated cheese +/- meat with bread and butter/ toast
- Jacket potato with cheese/ tuna mayonnaise/ baked beans/ coleslaw/ egg mayo
- Tinned macaroni cheese/ ravioli/ stew/ casserole with mashed potato
- "Cream of" soup with additional milk/ cream/ cheese with bread/ sandwich
- Boil in the bag or oven ready fish and chips/ mashed potato

Puddings

- Milk puddings e.g. custard, rice pudding, semolina, sago with jam/ sugar/ cream
- Individual desserts e.g. trifle, chocolate mousse, ice cream, full fat yoghurt
- Cake, pie or sponge pudding and custard

Information for Patients

- Tinned or stewed fruit with custard
- Asian puddings such as seviyaan, halwa, kheer, barfi or gajrela

TO MAKE FORTIFIED MILK:

Take 4 tablespoons of dried milk powder (e.g.; Marvel, Five Pints or a supermarkets own brand) and make a paste with a little milk. Whisk in the remainder of the one pint of full fat milk.

Store in a refrigerator and use as ordinary milk.

If you require this information in another format, such as a different language, large print, braille or audio version please ask a member of staff or email patientexperience@uhb.nhs.uk.