

A guide to eating well if you have a small appetite or are trying to gain weight

For fragility patients

Nutrition and Dietetics Patient Information Leaflet

Introduction

If you have a poor appetite, have problems with eating or have lost weight recently, it is important that the food and drinks that you have contain as much calories and protein as possible.

This helps you to either gain weight or prevent further weight loss, to recover from illness or surgery, heal more quickly and reduce the risk of infection. This leaflet gives more information about how you can do this.

It is important to eat simple meals, snacks and drinks to increase your protein and calorie intakes without you having to increase the amount of food that you eat.

General tips

- Aim to have three small meals plus two to three nourishing snacks in between (eating every two to three hours).
- Avoid low-fat or reduced-sugar foods or drinks.
- Use full-fat (whole) milk instead of skimmed or semi-skimmed milk and normal butter, margarine, ghee, olive oil or sunflower spread rather than low-fat spread.
- Have drinks after meals, rather than before or with meals.
- Try to eat in a relaxed and comfortable environment.
- Aim to drink at least 900 to 1200ml (six to eight cups) of fluid daily. Ideally 568ml (one pint) of which is full-fat (whole) milk or fortified milk.

Suggestions for enriching drinks and snacks to add more calories

- Fortified milk can be made by adding four heaped tablespoons (about 50g) of dried skimmed milk powder to one pint of full-fat milk. This can be used, for example, in drinks, on cereal, in custard and rice pudding, and in cheese sauce.
- Spread butter or margarine thickly on bread or crackers and use liberally as follows:
 - Melt onto vegetables, boiled potatoes or jacket potatoes
 - Stir into hot pasta or rice
 - Stir into baked beans or scrambled eggs
- Add grated cheese to soups, omelettes, scrambled eggs, baked beans or tinned spaghetti.
- Add cream, ice cream or custard to puddings or fruit (fresh, tinned or stewed).

Breakfast

- Bowl of cereal or porridge with milk, fortified milk or cream and sugar.
- Toast, crumpets, muffins with thickly spread butter or margarine plus jam, marmalade, peanut butter or egg (scrambled or fried).
- Hot buttered teacakes, hot cross buns or croissants.
- Bacon, sausage and/or egg sandwich.
- Pancakes or waffles with maple syrup or jam.

Light meal ideas

- Sandwiches with meat, corned beef, chicken, tuna, egg or cheese, with pickles, relish or mayonnaise.
- 'Cream of' type of soups or lentil or bean soups served with bread and butter; or try adding cheese or cream.
- Omelette with extra cheese or ham with tomatoes, baked beans or bread and butter.
- Buttered toast with cheese, baked beans, egg, pilchards, sardines, bacon or sausage.
- Ravioli or spaghetti on toast – try adding extra butter or grated cheese.
- Macaroni cheese, cauliflower cheese – try adding extra grated cheese and butter.
- Jacket potato with butter and cheese and beans, cheese or tuna mayonnaise.
- Corned beef hash, cheese and potato pie, quiche, cottage pie, lasagne, fish pie.
- Meat, chicken, fish or vegetarian alternative with cheese or creamy sauce, mashed potatoes with butter or margarine and cream, roast potatoes, chips and vegetables (with butter melted on top).

Puddings

- Trifle
- Thick and creamy yoghurt (full fat variety)
- Rice or other milk-based pudding
- Custard
- Chocolate mousse
- Fromage frais
- Asian sweets (mithai)
- Sponge pudding or cake slices and custard
- Fruit crumble and custard, cream or ice cream

Nourishing snacks and drinks

- Milky drinks such as coffee, malted drinks or hot chocolate
- Milkshake – try adding ice cream or cream
- Small bowl of breakfast cereal with full-fat or fortified milk
- Small piece of cheese with or without buttered crackers or cheese biscuits
- Nuts (plain, salted, roasted or coated in chocolate or with dried fruit)
- Slice of cake or a pastry
- Mini pork pies, sausage rolls, scotch eggs, spring rolls, pakora, onion bhajis, samosas
- Plantain chips, meat pies and pasties
- Peanut butter on toast
- Bombay mix (chevda)

What if I do not eat dairy produce?

Although dairy produce is an excellent source of calcium, it does not suit everyone. Alternative sources of calcium can be found in the following products:

Calcium-enriched orange juice (250mls)	★ ★ ★
Sardines (with bones), half a tin (60g)	★ ★ ★ ★
Calcium enriched milk alternative (e.g. soy, oat and nut)	★ ★ ★ ★
Calcium-fortified cereal	★ ★
Calcium-fortified soy yoghurt, custard or dessert	★ ★
White bread – 2 large slices	★
Orange x 1	★
Broccoli, boiled 2 spears (85g)	★

1 star = 60mg calcium ★

What about Vitamin D?

To make sure that the calcium in our food is absorbed for use in our bones, we need to make sure that we get enough vitamin D. The action of sunlight on the skin is the best source of vitamin D. In the summertime, going outside for 15 minutes, two or three times a week without sunscreen should be enough to produce sufficient vitamin D.

Some people will not be able to get enough vitamin D from sunlight because they have very little or no sunlight exposure. A supplement containing 10 micrograms of vitamin D is recommended by the Department of Health. Supplements are readily available over the counter at pharmacies and supermarkets or your GP may prescribe supplements based on local prescribing guidelines.

^Δ This information has been adapted from BDA Calcium and Vitamin D Food Fact Sheets, and NHS choices.

Can I find out more?

If you have any questions, are unsure about any of the information provided in this booklet, or require any further information about our services, please contact a member of the Nutrition and Dietetics Team on one of the numbers listed below:

- Dietitians Department, Russells Hall Hospital on:
01384 244017 (8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday)
- Community dietitians at Stourbridge Health & Social Care Centre on:
01384 323749 (8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

You can find out more from the following weblinks:

- The Association of UK Dietitians Food Fact Sheets at:
[Food facts](#)
- NHS choices:
[Vitamin D](#)
[Calcium](#)

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number: 01384 456111

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dudleygroup.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email dgft.patient.information@nhs.net

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

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此宣传单可提供大字版本、音频版本和其它语言版本，请拨打电话：0800 073 0510。

Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

ਇਹ ਪਰਚਾ ਵੱਡੇ ਅੱਖਰਾਂ, ਬੋਲ ਕੇ ਰੀਕਾਰਡ ਕੀਤਾ ਹੋਇਆ ਅਤੇ ਦੂਸਰੀਆਂ ਭਾਸ਼ਾਵਾਂ ਵਿਚ ਵੀ ਪ੍ਰਾਪਤ ਹੋ ਸਕਦਾ ਹੈ, 0800 073 0510 ਤੇ ਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ ਜੀ।

Aceasta broșura poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru va rugăm sunați la 0800 073 0510.

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