

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 Help you 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 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 dietician 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, eg; 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
- Drink along with or after your meal. Drinking before meals can fill you up.
- 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, keer (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 bhature or puri (Asian bread)

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- 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 yogurt/ 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

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- Individual desserts e.g. trifle, chocolate mousse, ice cream, full fat yoghurt
- Cake, pie or sponge pudding and custard
- 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 (eg; Marvel, Five Pints) 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.

Reviewed by R Lees - 17th November 2010

Additional Sources of Information:

Go online and view NHS Choices website for more information about a wide range of health topics <http://www.nhs.uk/Pages/HomePage.aspx>

You may want to visit one of our Health Information Centres located in:

- Main Entrance at Birmingham Heartlands Hospital Tel: 0121 424 2280
- Treatment Centre at Good Hope Hospital Tel: 0121 424 9946
- You+ Centre, 1 Coppice Way, Chelmsley Wood, B37 5TS Tel: 0800 015 3265

or contact us by email: healthinfo_centre@heartofengland.nhs.uk.

Our commitment to confidentiality

We keep personal and clinical information about you to ensure you receive appropriate care and treatment. Everyone working in the NHS has a legal duty to keep information about you confidential. We will always ask you for your consent if we need to use information that identifies you. We will share information with other parts of the NHS to support your healthcare needs, and we will inform your GP of your progress unless you ask us not to. You can help us by pointing out any information in your records which is wrong or needs updating.

Dear Patient

We welcome your views on what you liked and suggestions for how things could be improved at this hospital. If you would like to tell us and others about your experience please make your comments through one of the following sites:-

- NHS Choice:- www.nhs.uk
- Patient Opinion:- www.patientopinion.org.uk
- I want great care:- www.iwantgreatcare.org (Here you can leave feedback about your doctor)

Be helpful and respectful: think about what people might want to know about this Trust or how your experiences might benefit others. Remember your words must be polite and respectful, and you cannot name individuals on the NHS Choice or Patient Opinion sites.

If you have any questions you may want to ask about your condition or treatment, or anything you do not understand or wish to know more about, write them down and your doctor will be more than happy to try and answer them for you.