

## A guide for patients about making the most of every mouthful

Your body needs energy and protein to ensure you have a nutritionally adequate diet. Having a good nutritional intake will help you:

- to regain weight lost due to illness or surgery
- to help your body fight infection
- to maintain muscles and prevent weight loss
- to help keep skin healthy and help wounds or pressure sores to heal.

This information sheet gives practical advice on ways to make your meals and snacks more nutritious by increasing the protein and energy in your diet.

Some tips on how to increase your intake of food:

1. Eat little and often. Try having five to six small meals and snacks every day.
2. Keep snacks handy, and don't just eat at conventional meal times. Eat whatever you like when you feel hungry or when your appetite is best.
3. Try not to fill up on fluids as this may affect your appetite. Have a drink after meals if possible.
4. Eat slowly, chew well and relax after meals.
5. Get some fresh air or go for a walk before meals to stimulate your appetite.
6. Nutritious drinks can be prescribed by a registered dietitian or GP, or can be bought over the counter e.g. Build Up and Complian

### Eating Made Easy

If you are finding it difficult to prepare food, don't be afraid to try the wide range of convenience meals available. These can save you time and energy. Remember, you can still add extra calories in the same way as normal foods e.g. adding plenty of butter, grated cheese, extra sauces and gravy.

#### Avoid

Low fat or low calorie  
Healthy eating  
'Green traffic light'

#### Try

Luxury or creamy  
'Finest', 'the best' or 'extra special'  
'Red' or 'amber traffic light'

You may also wish to look into delivered meals in your area e.g. Meals on Wheels, Wiltshire Farm Foods or Oakhouse Foods. Remember you will need freezer space for storage. For further information, ask your doctor, registered Dietitian, social services representative, or look at the supplier's websites.

Have a hearty breakfast:

- Add nuts, dried fruit, cream, yoghurt, honey or sugar to porridge and cereals.
- Make cereal with fortified full fat milk, evaporated or condensed milk.
- Pancakes, toast or croissant with butter, jam, marmalade, peanut butter, chocolate spread or cream cheese.
- Bacon, sausage or egg bun.

Quick and easy meals:

- Baked beans, egg or spaghetti on toast with butter or spread.
- Quiche, omelette or scrambled egg with cheese and toast.
- 'Cream of' or meat based soup with bread and butter (add some cream).
- Pasta in a sauce with meat, chunks of chicken or tinned fish.



- Pie, burger or pizza with beans or frozen vegetables and chips.
- Sandwiches with plenty of butter or spread filled with:
  - Meat
  - Egg mayonnaise
  - Tuna mayonnaise
  - Cheese and pickle
  - Peanut butter
  - Bacon
- Jacket potato with plenty of butter or margarine filled with:
  - Tuna mayonnaise
  - Cheese
  - Baked beans
  - Coleslaw



### When cooking

- Be organised and cook in bulk, keep enough for the following day and freeze the rest in individual portions (in freeze bags or plastic containers). Remember to label and date them.
- When needed, remove from freezer, defrost in the fridge overnight and ensure they are piping hot throughout when reheated.

### Snack Ideas

Have high energy snacks between meals and before bed.

#### Sweet choices

- Breakfast cereal
- Biscuits
- Chocolate
- Cake
- Flapjack
- Crumpets, muffins, hot crossed buns or doughnuts
- Dried fruit.



#### Savoury choices

- Cheese and biscuits
- Toast with jam, cheese, meat, pate or peanut butter
- Bagel with cream cheese
- Toasted crumpets, teacakes, fruit cake or malt loaf with butter and cheese
- Sausage rolls, pork pie, cocktail sausages
- Spring roll or sesame toast
- Cheese straws
- Bhaji, samosa, bombay mix
- Crisps, pretzels
- Nuts
- Olives.



**Puddings**

Have these after meals or as snacks in between meals and add the following to them.

- Cream
- Custard
- Margarine
- Butter
- Ice cream
- Jam
- Honey
- Dried fruit
- Nuts.



**Cold ready-made desserts**

- Crème caramel
- Mousse
- Custard tarts
- Trifle
- Rice pudding
- Chocolate pudding
- Yoghurt
- Egg custard
- Cheesecake
- Ice-cream.

**Hot desserts**

- Crumble or Pie
- Treacle pudding
- Bread and butter pudding.

**Food fortification**

This means adding extra energy and protein to your meals. Fortifying your food can help you to gain weight without needing to eat more.

<p><b>Yoghurts:</b> full fat, thick and creamy</p>	<p>Try to avoid slimming/low calorie types. Have as a</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Snack or pudding</li> <li>• Topping e.g. breakfast cereals, fruit salad</li> <li>• Chilli con carne, curries, savoury sauces and dips</li> </ul>
<p><b>Fats</b> e.g. butter, margarine, cooking oils, ghee, mayonnaise, salad cream or dressing, lard or suet and cheeses</p>	<p>Add to or have with;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sandwiches, bread and toast</li> <li>• Potatoes, salads and vegetables</li> <li>• Soups, stews and sauces</li> <li>• Crackers and biscuits</li> <li>• Baked beans and cheese sauce</li> <li>• Shepherds pie, lasagne, macaroni cheese and pizza</li> </ul>
<p><b>Pulses</b> e.g. Beans, Lentils, Split Peas, Baked, Haricot and Kidney Beans</p>	<p>Add to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Soups, casseroles and cottage pie</li> <li>• Toast</li> <li>• Salads</li> </ul>
<p><b>Cream;</b> double, single, whipped, clotted, and sour</p>	<p>Use generously in or on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Porridge, Weetabix and Ready Brek</li> <li>• Soup</li> <li>• Milky puddings and desserts</li> <li>• Milkshakes and smoothies</li> <li>• Scones, crumpets and tea cakes</li> </ul>



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Dips, and sauces</li> <li>• Fruit and milky drinks</li> </ul>
<b>Dried skimmed milk powder</b> e.g. Marvel, Kerrygold, Plus Pints, or supermarkets own brand	Add to ready-made foods e.g. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milky puddings</li> <li>• Custard</li> <li>• Porridge</li> <li>• Soups</li> </ul>
<b>Sugary foods</b> e.g. sugar, honey, jam, sugary drinks, and sweets  If you are not used to sugar, try glucose as it is not as sweet. This is available from chemists and health food shops.	Use where possible: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hot drinks e.g. coffee, tea, hot chocolate</li> <li>• Cold drinks e.g. concentrated squashes, fruit juices</li> <li>• Porridge and breakfast cereals</li> <li>• Puddings and desserts</li> <li>• Bread, toast, crumpets and scones</li> <li>• Jellies and tinned fruit in syrup</li> </ul>

### Nourishing drinks

Water is used by every cell in your body, and is important to keep your kidneys and bowels working properly. Your body often needs water even when you don't feel thirsty. This means it is important that you make sure you are drinking enough (i.e. between 6 to 8 glasses).

Drinks can be a good source of energy as well. Some people find that drinking 1 pint of whole milk each day helps to maintain their weight as well as being a tasty drink. You can even fortify it to increase the protein and energy.

### Full cream milk (blue or gold top)

<b>Full cream milk</b> (blue or gold top)	Have it in: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Milky puddings e.g. Angel Delight, rice pudding, custard and semolina</li> <li>• Hot and cold drinks</li> <li>• Soups</li> <li>• Breakfast cereals</li> <li>• Mashed potato</li> <li>• Creamy sauces e.g. cheese sauce</li> <li>• Milkshakes and smoothies</li> </ul>
	
<b>Condensed or evaporated milk</b>	If you are having problems using a pint of milk daily then try evaporated and condensed milks in drinks, milk puddings, milk, jelly, mouse and porridge.

Fortified milk can be used in place of ordinary milk.

**Ingredients:** 1 pint full cream milk (blue top)  
2 to 4 tablespoons of dried milk powder e.g. Marvel, Plus Pints, Kerrygold or most supermarkets sell an own brand as well.

**Instructions:** Mix the powder in some milk to form a smooth paste.  
Whisk the rest of the milk in slowly.  
Store in a jug in the fridge.  
Don't worry; it doesn't change the taste or texture.

### Drink ideas

- Full fat (whole) milk
- Fruit Juice
- Yoghurt drinks
- Supplement drinks such as Complan and Build Up
- Hot milk in coffee, tea, drinking chocolate or cocoa as well as malted drinks e.g. Horlicks, Ovaltine or Bournvita. You could even have some whipped cream on top!
- Cold milk in milkshakes or smoothies.

### Home-made smoothie or milk shake.

To make your own smoothie, you need to blend a mixture of ingredients together in a food processor or with a hand blender.

You could make one of the following combinations, or create your own.

1. Full cream milk, banana, ice cream, skimmed milk powder, honey
2. Full cream milk, coffee, vanilla ice cream, double cream
3. Orange juice, banana, mango, creamy yoghurt
4. Orange juice, creamy yoghurt, strawberry, raspberry, banana
5. Full cream milk, creamy yoghurt, strawberry

### Cupboard Essentials

The following foods are useful to have for days when you don't feel like cooking from scratch. Only buy the products you know you like and will use!

They don't last forever so remember to check the 'use by' date.

#### Milk and milk products

Long life milks, dried milk powder, evaporated, condensed, long life milky puddings and desserts, dried instant custard and long life cream.

#### Cereals

Breakfast cereals, crackers and breadsticks, biscuits, pasta, rice, dried mashed potato, fresh scones, crumpets and muffins can be frozen.

#### Fruit and vegetables

Tinned, frozen and dried fruit and vegetables, and long life fruit juice.

#### Meat, fish and protein foods

Tinned sardines, kippers, tuna, corned beef, ham, frozen meat based ready meals, canned soups, eggs, baked beans, tinned beans, lentils, peas to add to stews and casseroles.



### Contact us...

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