

Eating enough to support your recovery at home

Nutrition and Dietetic Service

Information for Patients

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When you are sick mealtimes can be a struggle and you may not feel hungry. Eating well is really important to help you get better. If you are struggling to eat enough, you are losing weight or strength in your muscles, try some of the following tips to make sure the foods you do eat are as nourishing as possible:

- Choose higher calorie or full fat options when possible. These foods are usually recommended in small amounts but they can be good at this time. For example have full cream milk in drinks and on cereal. Have thick and creamy yoghurts.
- Avoid 'diet', 'low fat' or 'low calorie' foods and drinks at this time as they will not give you as much energy.
- You can add to the foods you have, for example:
 - add extra calories to your food by adding extra butter e.g. to mashed potatoes, jacket potato, vegetables, toast, bread rolls, and crackers.
 - add milk powder to milk. Whisk 2 to 4 tablespoons of milk powder into a pint of milk.
 - add grated cheese or cream cheese to soups, sauces, curries, or on toast/ crackers.
 - use mayonnaise, salad cream or dressing in sandwiches and salads.
 - add honey/ syrup/ jam to porridge, milky puddings, yoghurt, toast, teacakes, crackers.
 - add greek yoghurt to cereal, smoothies, curries, dahl sauce, soups, savoury dishes.
 - add single or double cream to porridge, breakfast cereals, custard, rice pudding, yogurts, instant whips/ mousses, curries.
- Try to include some foods which are high in protein. This includes meat, fish, beans, lentils, cheese, milk and yoghurts, tofu, Quorn and nuts.
- Take your time and relax. There is no need to rush your meal. It is fine to take a rest between the main course and the pudding if that helps.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
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- If having a big meal feels too much, try having small portions; you can always go back for more, or eat more frequently.
- Make sure you have something at each meal time, even if your appetite is small.
- When your appetite is poor it helps to eat 'little and often'. Try and have something between meals as well. Think about having something 5 to 6 times a day.
- Have snacks readily available so you can have a little whenever you can. Examples could include crackers with cheese, crisps/ cheese crackers/ Bombay spice mix, sausage roll or cold mini sausages, toast with topping, biscuits, cakes, cereal bars, cereal with full fat milk, full fat yogurt, mousse, trifle, crème caramel, crème brûlée or luxury ice-cream.
- Drinks can also help to provide the nutrition you need. Try a glass of full cream milk between meals, or milkshakes, smoothies, flavoured milks, malted milk drinks (Horlicks or Ovaltine) or hot chocolate.
- Powdered supplements made up with milk, such as Complan, Meritene, and Aymes Retail are available from most supermarkets and pharmacies. They come in a variety of flavours and can be used between meals.
- Eat more of the food you enjoy at the times of day when you feel most like eating.
- It is fine to use convenience foods from your cupboard or freezer if you don't feel like cooking, for example soup, baked beans, ready meals, tinned puddings, custard.
- Take drinks after meals if you feel full easily.
- A small amount of exercise may improve your appetite.
- It is important to eat a varied diet if possible.

Weigh yourself regularly and keep a record. If you are unable to weigh yourself be aware of visual signs of weight loss, such as jewellery and clothes becoming looser. If you continue to lose weight talk to your doctor, nurse or dietitian.

If you have had advice from a health care professional before to follow a special diet, you will need to carry on with this. If you are not sure how this will work with the advice given here, or are struggling with a part of your diet, please speak to your doctor, nurse or dietitian for help.

Once you feel better and your appetite returns to normal, it is best to return to eating a healthy balanced diet. The 'Eatwell Guide' is useful to look at and can be viewed from this link:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/742750/Eatwell_Guide_booklet_2018v4.pdf

Contact details: Nutrition and Dietetic Service - 0116 258 5400

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على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل
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