

A nourishing diet

Advice for adults who have a poor appetite or need to gain weight

Your Dietitian is: Tel: **01202 704732**

Who is this advice for?

This information is for anyone who has recently lost a significant amount of weight, has a low body mass index (BMI) and/or is experiencing a reduced appetite. This information will support you to increase energy, protein, vitamins and minerals in your diet to help keep you feeling and functioning well. Once you feel that your appetite and weight have improved you should continue to eat a healthy balanced diet with regular activity.

If you feel you need more support or notice ongoing weight loss in spite of this advice please ask your GP to refer you to a dietitian.

How can I make my diet more nourishing?

The following three sections will cover ways for you to get the most nutrition out of your food. If you struggle with hard foods and find them difficult to chew or swallow, try softer options, add extra sauce/ gravy, avoid tough/stringy meats and choose soft desserts.

1. Fortify your food

- Add butter, olive oil, or mayonnaise to sandwiches, salads, or potatoes.
- Choose full fat milk, cream, cheese and full sugar foods.
- Add cheese to soups, mashed potato, curry and pasta dishes, scrambled egg.
- Add cream or condensed milk to puddings.

These approaches will increase the calories and protein in each serving of your meals, without needing to increase your portion size.

- Add extra 'skimmed milk powder' to full fat milk to further increase nutrition. Use this milk on cereal, in puddings and hot drinks and soups/mashed potato.

Add 4 tablespoons of skimmed milk powder to 1 pint of full cream milk. You can buy skimmed milk powder at most supermarkets.

2. Little and Often

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eat 3 small meals with 2-3 additional snacks each day. 	<p>Trial this approach if you struggle to finish meals, or are put off by big portions.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you like milk/fortified plant based milk, try having a glass as a snack. 	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Have puddings with your meals. 	<p>This will increase the calories of your overall meal.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add cream or condensed milk to puddings. 	

3. Top Tips

- Try cold snacks and foods if you find food smells unappealing.
- Enjoy some fresh air to stimulate your appetite
- Avoid drinking too much fluid at mealtimes. This will fill your stomach up.
- Choose foods you enjoy.

Ideas for nutritious meals and snacks

Meals	Snacks
<p>On toast/jacket potato:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheese • Scrambled egg (try making with full fat milk, butter and cheese for extra nutrition) • Baked beans • Hummus • Tuna mayonnaise 	<p>Savoury:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pâté on toast • Cheese on toast • Slice of quiche • Scotch eggs • Sausage roll/pork pie • Nuts • Toasted crumpet • Mini Cornish pasty • Cheese and onion rolls • Cheese and crackers
<p>Filled omelettes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cheese • Cream cheese • Extra oil 	<p>Sweet:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full fat yoghurt • Rice pudding • Ice cream • Fruit and cream • Trifle • Malt loaf with butter • Pastries/ scones with cream and jam • Chocolate • Tea cake with butter
<p>Ready-prepared meals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wiltshire Farm Foods • Oakhouse • Supermarket ready meals (not low calorie) 	
<p>Try to have a small snack with a glass of milk/milky drink between each meal and before bed to increase your daily calorie intake without needing to eat bigger portions.</p>	

What about nutritional supplements?

Complan shakes and Meritene drinks are available from your pharmacy and supermarkets.

They are a good way of improving your energy and protein intake. Try to make these with full fat milk so they are more nourishing.

You can also get nutritional supplements on prescription from your GP if they feel this is appropriate.

Suggested meal plan

Breakfast:	Fortified porridge or cereal and milk. Cooked breakfast all cooked in vegetable oil e.g. scrambled egg, mushrooms, tomato and beans. Bread/toast with butter or vegetable oil spread and/or marmalade/jam. Cup of milky tea or coffee/hot chocolate /fruit juice.
Mid morning:	Hummus or guacamole dip and 1 small pitta bread. 2 chocolate biscuits. Cheese and crackers. Glass of fruit juice or glass of milk/plant based drink.
Lunch:	Egg mayo/ cheese/ tuna mayo sandwich. Fortified soup with toast/bread or cheese on toast. Stewed fruit and custard or fruit salad with natural yoghurt and honey. Cup of milky tea or coffee/hot chocolate /fruit juice.
Mid afternoon:	Packet of nuts/raisins/dried fruit / piece of malt loaf / thick and creamy yoghurt. Cup of milky tea or coffee /fruit juice.
Dinner:	Shepherd's pie or similar dish, fortified with creamy mash, and vegetables roasted in olive oil. Pasta dish with sauce, meat/ fish and vegetables, add milk/ cream and cheese for extra calories and protein. Fortified mash potato with vegetables, meat/ fish. Crumble or sponge with custard (make with full fat milk or soy milk/ cream).
Supper:	Toast with peanut butter or jam. Hot milky drink made with full fat or fortified milk or fortified plant based drink e.g. soya/almond/oat milk.

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If you have any queries or concerns about your care at the Royal Bournemouth and Christchurch Hospitals NHS Foundation Trust, the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) would be happy to help you and can be contacted on **01202 704886/704301** or **pals@rbch.nhs.uk**.

If you would like this leaflet printed in a larger font, please contact the Communications Team on **01202 704905** during the office hours of 8.30am-5pm Monday - Friday.



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Website: www.rbch.nhs.uk ■ **Tel:** 01202 303626