

Food First

A guide to eating well when you have a poor appetite or have lost weight
Information for patients, their family and friends



NUTRITION AND DIETETICS

Department of Health and Social Care

Rheynn Slaynt as Kiarail y Theay



**Isle of Man
Government**

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You have been provided with this diet sheet because it has been highlighted that you have either lost weight recently, are underweight or are having significant difficulties eating adequate amounts of energy and protein to sustain your body. There may be various different reasons for this.

This information has been put together to help you improve your dietary intake. With better nutrition, you are likely to be stronger, more mobile and have a better immune system. If you are a healthy weight for your height, you are likely to feel more energetic, recover faster from any bugs, infections and wounds/surgeries and likely to spend less time being unwell or in hospital, ultimately allowing you to do more of the things you enjoy most.

This booklet will explain some ways in which you can increase your nutritional intake when you find it tricky and your appetite is poor.

If your weight does not improve and you continue to lose weight, please contact your district nurse, practice nurse, GP or Dietitian.

Please note: *This advice may not be suitable for some medical conditions. E.g. food allergies, and swallowing problems (dysphagia).*

If you have diabetes and are experiencing ongoing weight loss, having difficulty taking solid food or have had high blood sugar readings, please contact your nurse or GP.

It is also important to remember to keep up with good mouth hygiene and ensure you brush your teeth regularly.

Dietitian: _____

Telephone Number: (01624) 650865/650870

Good Food Guide:

Every day, aim to include the following –

1. **1 pint of full cream milk** (blue top):

This can be taken over the day in cereal, hot drinks, meals and cooking as well as on its own as a drink.

2. **Two protein portions:**

Meat, Chicken, fish, well-cooked eggs, nuts, beans, lentils or pulses.

3. **Starchy food with each meal – carbohydrates:**

This includes potatoes, bread, rice, pasta, cereal or chapattis. Choose wholegrain varieties to help keep your bowels healthy.

4. **Two puddings**

Will help boost overall energy and protein intake without having a large amount of food at once.



5. **A small portion of fruit and vegetables with each meal**

This will top up your vitamin, mineral and fibre intake.

Hints and tips

- *Always have breakfast* and try not to get out of the habit of eating throughout the day – you'll notice how eating can actually stimulate your appetite.
- *Eat 'little & often' in the day:* aim to include 3 meals and 3 snacks based on nourishing foods and fluids every 2-3 hours throughout the day.
- *Have snacks between meals and at bedtime.* Aim for smaller amounts of nourishing food or drink. Ideas are listed on page 5.
- *Try to have 2 small courses at each meal.* It's OK to have a short rest of 15-20 minutes in-between.
- *Aim to drink towards the end of your meal.* So, as not to spoil your appetite. This goes for soup as well, however if you enjoy soup, have a small portion.

Its important to stay hydrated. Aim for at least 1 glass/cup of something with each meal and 1-2 glasses/cups between meals. Try to aim for nourishing fluids.

- *A small glass of wine or sherry or a measure of spirits* an hour before your meal may give you more of an appetite. Check with your doctor first.
- *Consider an A-Z multivitamins and mineral supplement* if you are eating a small amount or a limited variety of foods. Avoid these if you are managing 3 or more supplement drinks daily (such as Complan or prescribed supplement drinks).



Fortified Diet Plan

- *Fortify your milk:* add 2-4 heaped tablespoons of dried skimmed milk powder to 1 pint of full cream milk and mix until smooth. Chill in the fridge and then use on cereals, in porridge, to make up sauces, soups, desserts, jellies or milky drinks etc.
- *Fortify your food:* add toppers directly to any food/drink you plan to have. This way you can increase the calories and protein, without increasing the volume. Ideas are listed on the next page.
- *Choose full fat and full sugar products* rather than 'diet' 'reduced/low fat' 'low sugar' or 'healthy eating' varieties as these provide more calories.

Add a 50kcal food topper to each dish

Aim for 5 toppers each day

- 1 heaped teaspoon of butter
- 1 dessert spoon of oil
- 1 level tablespoon of double cream
- 1 heaped teaspoon of mayonnaise
- 1 heaped teaspoon of cream cheese
- ½ oz/12g of cheddar cheese (approx. ½ of a small matchbox size)
- 2 heaped teaspoons of sugar
- 1 level tablespoon of honey/golden syrup
- 1 heaped tablespoon of dried milk powder
- 1 tbsp. pesto
- 30ml coconut cream



Aim for 2 snacks each day (containing at least 150kcal)

- 1 small pot of full fat creamy yoghurt *
- 2 crackers and cheese*
- Thick and creamy yoghurt
- Small bowl of cereal with Full cream milk
- 1 banana or 1/2 tin of fruit with 2 tbsp double cream or condensed milk
- Slice of cake or maltloaf with butter
- 1.5 heaped tbsp. of dried fruit
- Handful of nuts*
- 1 mini pork pie*
- 2 digestive biscuits
- 1 x toast + 1tbsp peanut butter
- 3 cocktail sausages*
- 1 boiled egg*
- 1 slice of bread with butter and full fat cream cheese*
- Snack size (30-40g) Chocolate bar (Mars bar, Crunchie)
- 8 jelly babies
- Single Serving pudding (trifle, custard pot, cheesecake)



*** High protein choice**

Nourishing Drinks

It is important to remain well hydrated to help prevent or aid the treatment of:

Constipation

Low blood pressure

Confusion

Urinary infection

Pressure ulcers

Falls

You may find it useful to boost your energy intake by drinking nourishing fluids in the day as an alternative to water, for example.

Nourishing drinks includes

- Milk (opt for full cream or fortified milk) or drinks based on milk, such as Horlicks, Ovaltine, Cocoa
- Milky tea or coffee.
- Cuppa soup or instant hot chocolate+ 2 tablespoons of skimmed milk powder

Other supplements from your local pharmacy, such as Complan are also available over the counter. If required, a Dietitian may recommend prescribed supplements following a full nutritional assessment.



Basic Smoothie Recipe (Serves 2)

- 400ml full fat milk
- 2 tblsp (30ml) double cream
- 30g dried milk powder/Marvel
- 1 level tblsp sunflower or vegetable oil
- 2 tblsp Nesquik/milkshake powder

Per serving: 360 calories and 12.5g protein

Try adding 1 tbsp peanut butter and a banana for a delicious Banutty smoothie



Making meal-times easier

Don't be afraid to use ready-prepared meals or frozen, chilled or packets of food for days when you are tired or find cooking difficult.

Take up any offers of help with cooking and shopping from neighbours, friends or family and make use of home delivery services for delivering shopping or meals.

Many people find that eating in the company of others helps them to eat better, this could be with family or friends or with a lunch club.

If you are experiencing dental problems including ill-fitting dentures, contact your dentist who may be able to visit you at home if you cannot get along to the surgery.

Eating Better?

If your appetite has returned and you are eating well again, try to follow a healthy lifestyle and choose a balanced diet when you have recovered, you should be enjoying a variety of foods each day.

Helpful contacts:

Wiltshire farm foods provide frozen meals direct to your door. They cater for special diets as well. For a brochure call **0800 652 2911**

Community Wellbeing Service can help if you suffer from anxiety or depression. Feeling low can often affect your appetite. You can self-refer for support on **01624 642540**

Age Concern Isle of Man support people 50 years+ with specialist help, lunch clubs and life long learning. Call on **01624 631740** info@ageconcern.im

Silverline have a free confidential helpline providing information, friendship and advice to older people 24/7 365 days a year. Call on **0800 4 70 80 90**

Top Banana provides cooked meals island wide call **613675** or email meals@topbananafoods.im for more information

This document can be provided in large print
or audio file on request.



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Printed: March 2019

Review: March 2021

Origination: Therapies Division

Printed by Mannin Group