Food First

Advice for adults with a poor appetite

Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust
Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust

This booklet should be given to you by a healthcare professional. This advice is for short term use only.

Are you losing weight without trying? Are you eating and drinking less than usual?

Sometimes for a variety of reasons you may not eat or drink enough. This can make you ill as your body does not work as well as usual.

The advice in this booklet suggests ways to:

- Increase your food and fluid intake.
- Get the nutrients (e.g. energy, protein, vitamins and minerals) your body needs.

Please ask for more advice if:

- You feel the advice in this booklet is not specific enough for your way of eating or contradicts other dietary advice you have previously been given.
- You have swallowing difficulties.
- You have food allergies.

This advice can be modified to suit someone who has diabetes.

Contact your GP, practice nurse or dietitian for advice.

3 important changes you can make

1 **One pint of fortified milk every day**

See page 4 for more ideas

2 **Two nourishing snacks every day**

See page 6 for more ideas

3 **Three fortified meals every day**

See page 9 for more ideas

If you continue to struggle with your appetite or are still losing weight after four weeks of following this advice, speak with your GP, nurse or dietitian.

1 Pint of fortified milk every day

Milk is very good for you as it contains lots of nutrients including protein, vitamins and minerals.

Aim to have one pint of full fat milk every day including what you have on cereal and in drinks.

If you find it difficult to drink milk and milky drinks every day, try to eat more foods that contain milk such as custard, rice pudding or Kheer.

How to fortify your milk

You can add even more energy and protein to your milk by adding dried milk powder:

1 pint full fat milk

4 tablespoons dried milk powder *(usually found in the longlife milk section at the supermarket)*

1. Add the milk powder to the fresh milk.
2. Stir using a fork or whisk until dissolved.
3. Leave it covered in the fridge.
4. Aim to use the full pint by the end of each day. You can use it in hot drinks as well as cereal, milky puddings, custard, cheese sauce and scrambled egg.

Nourishing drinks

A nourishing drink gives you fluid but also important nutrients. You can sip a nourishing drink slowly in between meals.

Some ideas for **nourishing drinks**:

- Full fat milk
- Milkshake
- Smoothie
- Lassi
- Pure fruit juice
- Milky coffee
- Hot chocolate
- Malted milk drink
- Soup

Or make your own drink using fortified milk.

Fluid is very important to help your body function normally. You should try to drink up to 8 cups* of non-alcoholic fluid every day.

If you prefer **plant-based milks** choose those that have calcium and extra vitamins added. Plant based milks vary in their protein content. Try to choose soya, pea and oat milks as these contain the most protein.

Did you know?

Fortifying your milk doubles the protein content.

1 pint of fortified milk is equivalent to eating 6 slices of pizza!

*1 cup is approx. 200mls

2 Nourishing snacks every day

High in protein

- Cheese, individually wrapped snack cheese, Twarog (curd) cheese or quark
- Full fat yogurt (Greek, natural, fruit or plant based)

- Sausage roll, mini pork pie or pasty
- Tinned fish in olive oil or tomato sauce or vegan Tuno
- Soft (cream) cheese or free from vegan soft cheese

- Sliced meat or Quorn
- Milkshake or hot chocolate made with whole milk or dairy-free alternative
- Chicken pieces, prawns or tuna in full fat mayonnaise
- Falafel or meatballs

- Ice cream bar or choc ice
- Regular cottage cheese (add spices or pineapple for extra flavour)
- Salmon flakes or prawns
- Edamame beans

- Paneer tikka
- Meat kebab (Shish or Kofta)
- Hard boiled egg

- Samosa or Pierogi (meat or vegetable)
- Baked beans
- Dahl
- Milk pudding or Kheer (hot or cold)

High in carbohydrate

- Oatcakes or wholegrain crackers with spread
- Cheese biscuits with spread

- Rice cakes (multiple flavours available) with spread
- Fruit (fresh, tinned or frozen) with cream or ice cream
- Scone, fruit pie or cake with cream
- Flapjack, doughnut or cream cake
- Wholegrain pitta or sandwich thin with spread
- Breakfast cereal with fortified milk or cereal bars with an oat or nut base
- Shop-bought or homemade smoothie (made with full fat milk, ice cream or yogurt or add your own)
- Rye bread or malt loaf with spread
- Bhaji
- Flat bread or Missi Roti
- Barfi
- Small pancake or Dosa
- Small bowl of khichdi made with rice and lentils (or made into leftover bites)
- Aloo tikki

High in healthy fats

- Unsalted nuts
- Nut, seed and dried fruit mix
- Avocado
- Dark chocolate or chocolate bar
- Roasted chickpeas
- Nut butter
- Ground nuts or seeds added into milky drinks or sprinkled into desserts or porridge
- Halva Tahini bar (40g)
- Serving of Baklava (honey, nuts and pastry)
- Houmous
- Guacamole dip with vegetable sticks
- Small bowl of Gazpacho soup
- Olives

Helpful hints for eating with a reduced appetite

- Try to eat three meals and some snacks every day.
- Avoid missing meals.
- Make the most of any good days by eating well.
- Ready made, chilled or frozen foods are useful if you feel tired or cooking is difficult.

- Take time to relax at meal times.
- Eat your favourite foods.
- Don't drink a lot just before or with your meal. This may reduce your appetite. Drink more in between meals.
- Some fresh air before meals may improve your appetite.

- Smoking reduces appetite. Avoid smoking 30 minutes before eating.
- Smoking reduces taste and smell therefore making eating less enjoyable.
- Ask your health professional for advice about reducing or stopping smoking.

3 Fortified meals every day

What is food fortification?

Fortifying meals means adding extra nutrients to your food without increasing the amount that needs to be eaten.

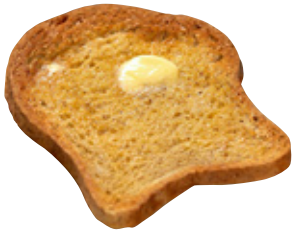
Why is it useful?

A reduced appetite can make it difficult to eat a full meal. Fortifying meals means you can still get the nutrients your body needs to stay healthy and gain weight without having to eat large amounts.

How do I fortify meals?

Use the ideas on the next few pages to choose some fortification methods that work for you and your preferences. The shopping ideas at the bottom of each page can help you remember what to buy.

Breakfast ideas



Make your breakfast more nourishing

Try adding full fat fortified milk to your fruit and cereal.

Try full fat or fortified milk in your porridge with your favourite topping.

Try something different on your toast, such as honey, beans and cheese, eggs, fried tomatoes.

Shopping list for breakfast

- Full fat milk
- Milk powder
- Full fat margarine or butter
- Breakfast cereals* and granola
- Full fat yogurts
- Oats, instant porridge or cornmeal
- Syrup, jam, honey, treacle, lemon curd
- Continental meats
- Nut butters
- Baked beans
- Eggs, bacon, sausages, black pudding
- Chocolate spread
- Dried fruit, tinned fruit in syrup
- Cheese, cheese spread

*choose wholegrain options for good gut health

Main meal ideas

Make your main meal more nourishing

Try mashing your potatoes with butter and cream. Fry or roast vegetables. Add a creamy sauce to your meat or fish.

Add fats such as oil, cream or coconut milk to curry. Serve with samosa, bhaji or naan bread. Fry your meat and vegetables.

Use cheese and butter to add extra energy to your convenience meal. Try serving it with extra buttered vegetables or chips.

Shopping list for main meals

- Instant sauces such as cheese, pepper or parsley
- Butter, margarine or ghee
- Cream
- Cheese
- Oil e.g. vegetable, olive
- Ready made meals
- Frozen, fresh or tinned vegetables
- Bread rolls
- Meat
- Fish
- Meat alternatives such as soya or tofu
- Pasta
- Rice
- Potatoes
- Sweet potatoes, plantain, yam or cassava
- Chips

More meal ideas

Make your meal more nourishing

Add extra toppings to your jacket potato such as cheese, baked beans, tuna mayonnaise or coleslaw. Don't forget some butter!

An omelette can be made more nourishing with extra cheese, cream, vegetables and meat. Cook your omelette with extra butter or oil.

When having a salad use full fat dressings and always serve it with bread, pasta, potatoes or rice as well as meat, fish, cheese or eggs.

Shopping list for other meals

- Eggs
- Potatoes
- Cheese and cheese spread
- Butter, margarine or ghee
- Oil e.g. vegetable, olive
- Full fat salad dressings and coleslaw
- Full fat ready made sandwich fillings
- Creamy soups
- Bread
- Pies
- Pasties
- Scotch eggs
- Paté
- Tinned meat and fish
- Cream
- Baked beans

Pudding ideas

Make your pudding more nourishing

Always choose full fat yogurts and desserts. Try adding squirty cream and fruit.

Add cream to milk puddings as well as jam or tinned fruit in syrup or honey.

If you like fruit try to have it with a topping such as evaporated or condensed milk, ice cream, custard, yogurt or cream.

Shopping list for puddings

- Full fat yogurts, mousses and fromage frais
- Full fat Greek or natural yogurt
- Individual cheesecakes, trifles and desserts
- Milky puddings
- Custard
- Cream
- Ice cream
- Tinned fruit
- Evaporated or condensed milk
- Syrup, honey and treacle
- Sponge cake
- Pies or tarts
- Baklava
- Ready made desserts to heat up e.g. treacle sponge and custard
- Instant mousse mix
- Cream cakes or scones
- Plant based desserts if you prefer

My ideas to try

Example: Make my coffee with full fat milk instead of water	**Example:** Swap to full fat cheese spread

Who can help?

Yorkshire Community meals service deliver hot meals, snacks or frozen meals to your home. Tel: **0113 247 8577.**

Presto offers a range of support to help live safe and well including meals on wheels, cleaning and companionship. Tel: **0113 378 3750**. Email: **prestocommunitymeals@leeds.gov.uk**

Leeds Directory provides information on community cafés, coffee mornings, lunch clubs, friendship groups, neighbourhood network schemes, day centres and much more. Tel: **0113 378 4610**. Email **leedsdirectory@leeds.gov.uk** or log onto **http://leedsdirectory.org**

Leeds Adult Social Care provides information on social care support and assessments of care needs. Tel: **0113 222 4401** or log onto **www.leeds.gov.uk/adult-social-care** or visit a **One Stop Centre** in various locations around Leeds.

If you have any queries please contact:

Dietitian / healthcare professional:	
Contact number:	

What did you think of your care?

Scan the QR code or visit **bit.ly/nhsleedsfft**

Your views matter

© The Leeds Teaching Hospitals NHS Trust • 6th edition (Ver 2 05/2024)

Produced by: Leeds Community Healthcare NHS Trust, Adult Nutrition and Dietetic Service • **www.leedscommunityhealthcare.nhs.uk 01/2024** Ref:0667 v4
MID code: 20240410_002/JG

LN002997
Publication date 05/2024
Review date 05/2027