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The Royal Liverpool
and Broadgreen
University Hospitals
NHS Trust

Patient information

Build Yourself Up

A guide to eating well for people with kidney problems

Therapies- Dietetics Department

Name:

Date:

Dietitian:

Introduction

When your kidneys are not working properly, you may have a poor appetite, taste changes or weight loss. This may be due to one or more of the following reasons:

- Waste products build up in your blood, which can make you feel nauseous (sickly) and generally unwell.
- If you are on dialysis you may find that you eat less well on dialysis days.
- Your renal diet and medication may have affected your enjoyment of food.

Eating well is extremely important to ensure you receive all the goodness you need. The following tips will help you to do this:

- Include nutritious snacks and drinks between meals or as part of a meal.
- Enrich or fortify foods you already eat (see the section on enriching your food).
- Eat more high calorie foods.

Once your appetite is back to normal and you are not losing weight, return to your original diet. Ask your dietitian for further advice.

General Advice

- It is easier to try and spread your food into several small meals by eating every two to three hours rather than the normal three meals a day. Aim to eat several (six or more) small meals/snacks each day.
- You could eat the main part of a meal and eat the pudding a couple of hours later.
- Remember building yourself up takes time. Everyone's appetite changes between good and bad days. Make the most of the good days by eating well and treating yourself to your favourite foods.
- In addition to the advice in this diet sheet, your dietician may recommend that you take nutritional supplement drinks or powders. If this is necessary your dietitian will discuss this with you and then ask your GP to prescribe these.

Enriching your food

The following advice will help to add more goodness to your food:-

- Spread margarine or butter thickly on bread and toast and add to vegetables and potatoes before serving.
- Cook with fats and oils e.g. fry eggs, fish or meat, roast/sauté potatoes or chips (remember to boil potatoes first).
- Add plenty of jam, marmalade or honey to porridge and milk puddings or spread thickly on toast, bread or crumpets.
- Add sugar to drinks, breakfast cereals or puddings.
- Use full cream/full fat milk instead of semi-skimmed or skimmed milk (keep to your milk allowance unless otherwise advised by your dietitian).
- Add skimmed milk powder to milk allowance.
- Avoid having diet, low fat or low sugar foods and drinks.
- Add double/single cream or crème fraîche to breakfast cereals, porridge, sauces, mashed potatoes, tinned fruit, milk puddings, custard, cakes and pastries.
- Add mayonnaise or salad cream generously to sandwiches.
- Sprinkle a small amount of grated cheese on to sauces, mashed potato, scrambled eggs and omelettes.

Nutritious Snacks and Drinks

The following foods and drinks are suitable as snacks or as part of a meal and are not high in potassium or phosphate.

Bread	White/wholemeal bread, rolls, hard dough bread, pitta bread, bagels filled with cold meat, cream cheese, egg mayonnaise or tuna mayonnaise. Teacakes, croissants, crumpets, muffins, breadsticks, chapattis or garlic bread.
Breakfast Cereals	Ricicles, Cornflakes, Rice Krispies, Sugar Puffs, Frosties, Puffed Wheat, Porridge, Weetabix, Oatabix or Shredded Wheat. Have with full fat milk and sugar.
Savoury Snacks	Pretzels, corn/maize snacks e.g. Wotsits, Skips, tortilla chips, Nik Naks. Wheat or rice based snacks e.g. Wheat Crunchies, prawn crackers. Samosas, sausage rolls or meat pasties. Buttered popcorn.
Biscuits	Sweet biscuits – shortbread, rich tea, digestives, Nice biscuits, Marie biscuits, ginger nuts, plain Hobnobs, custard creams, jammy dodgers. Savoury biscuits – cream crackers, water biscuits or crisp breads – spread thickly with cream cheese, butter, margarine, jam or marmalade. Cheese biscuits e.g. Cheddars, Ritz or TUC.
Cakes, Pastries and Puddings	Madeira sponge cake, jam or lemon swiss roll, victoria sandwich, cherry cake, jam doughnuts, cherry muffins, vanilla slice, cream cakes, iced buns, individual apple pies, fruit pies/crumbles/tarts (not apricot or dried fruit), custard, jam/lemon curd tarts. Tinned fruit in syrup, fruit crumble, lemon meringue pie, meringue nests with fruit and cream, cheese cake, trifle, mousses, fruit fools, Thick & Creamy yoghurts, luxury ice creams e.g. Haagen Daz, Ben & Jerry's.
Spreads	Sweet spreads - jam, marmalade, honey, lemon curd. Savoury spreads – butter/margarine, cream cheese e.g. Philadelphia, Boursin, supermarket own brand, meat or fish paste.
Sweets	Boiled sweets, mints, butterscotch, marshmallows, Starburst, Jelly Babies, Refreshers, Fruit Pastilles, peppermint creams, sherbet lemons, cola bottles, candied popcorn or marshmallows.
Drinks - Keep To Your Fluid Allowance	Fruit squashes and fizzy drinks e.g. lemonade, orangeade, ginger ale, bitter lemon, cola, bottled Lucozade. A little alcohol may help stimulate your appetite – spirits e.g. rum, vodka, brandy, gin, whisky. (Check with your doctor whether alcohol is allowed with your medication).

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Further Information

Renal Dietitians

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