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Eating well with a poor appetite

- advice for adults who have a poor appetite or have lost weight

Introduction

- It is important to try to eat well so that you will be stronger and more able to fight infection, and to aid recovery.
- If you have a poor appetite or have lost weight, changes to your diet can make a difference.
- Try small frequent meals and snacks to boost your appetite. This leaflet will give you ideas as to how you can do this.
- If you are on a special diet, this information may not be appropriate for you. Please ask your dietitian.

Helpful hints as an inpatient

- Feel free to ask for help when making your choices from the menu
- Aim to eat little and often
- Order extra snacks such as
 - Sandwiches
 - Cheese and crackers
 - Yogurts
 - Biscuits
- Try to eat protein foods such as meat, fish, cheese or beans at lunch and evening meal
- Try to have rice pudding or cake and custard desserts rather than jelly and ice-cream

- Remember you can ask for more than one helping of your favourite foods
- Snack boxes are available which contain finger size portions of various high kcal/high protein snacks if you think you won't manage a full meal.
- Include orange juice with your meals as this is a good source of vitamin C
- Ask for cups of milk as well as hot drinks

Helpful hints once you have been discharged

- Have your main meal at the time of day you feel most well. Try to eat every 2-3 hours.
- Keep a store cupboard of easily prepared foods, e.g. tinned meats and fish, UHT milk and fruit juice, dried mashed potato, packet soups, instant puddings.
- Avoid stressful mealtimes – it is understandable for you and your family to be concerned if you are not eating well, however, "little and often" is the key.
- Save drinks for in-between or after meals. Drinking before or with a meal can fill you up.

- If you are finding cooking difficult try using convenience/ready prepared meals, or try cold foods if the smell of cooking is putting you off eating.

Increasing your calories and protein

- Try to have protein foods such as meat, fish, egg, cheese, beans, lentils, nuts, dhal, quorn or tofu at least three times a day.
- Use 1 pint of full cream milk or enriched milk (see following page) every day.
Use in drinks, soups, sauces, puddings, lassi and on cereals.
- Try to have a pudding once or twice a day, e.g. thick and creamy yoghurts, tinned rice pudding, sponge pudding and custard, trifle, mousse, fruit pie, crumbles, keer (sweet rice).
- Include high calorie snacks e.g. sugar, jam, honey, sweets, chocolates, biscuits, cakes, sweetmeats.
- Try to add butter, margarine or olive oil to foods when cooking as this will increase your calorie intake. E.g. Spread margarine or butter thickly on bread, paratha, bhature or puri (Asian bread), add to vegetables or fry foods rather than grilling or steaming.
- To potatoes try adding, cream, grated cheese, full fat fromage frais, cooked bacon/ham/corned beef/tinned fish.
- To sauces try adding, cheese, cream, milk powder, ghee, butter/margarine, peanut butter.
- To soups try adding, grated cheese, croutons, dumplings, noodles/pasta, cream, milk powder
- To vegetables try adding, butter/margarine, cheese/parsley sauce

Snacks Ideas

- Glass of full fat/enriched milk/milkshake with a biscuit/cake

- Peanuts/mixed nuts and raisins
- Crackers or digestive biscuits and spreading cheese or cream cheese
- Chocolate bar, cake or other sweets
- Mini pork pie/sausage roll
- Toast/crumpet with butter and jam
- Individual desserts, e.g. thick and creamy yoghurt/chocolate mousse/trifle
- Fried dumplings/plaintain
- Crackers and avocado pear
- Samosa/Pakora

If you are managing small meals, ensure you take snacks in addition and in-between!

Ideas for Breakfast

- Cereal with full fat or enriched milk (see “increasing calorie and protein section for topping ideas”)
- Toast/croissant/butter
muffins/crumpet/mini pancakes with butter or jam
- Scrambled egg/bacon/sausage with a roll/on toast
- Glass of full fat/enriched milk with biscuits

If you can manage even a little breakfast it helps you to eat better for the rest of the day!

Ideas for light meals

- Toast with scrambled egg, cheese, baked beans, spaghetti, sardines, bacon, sausage
- Sandwich/roll with cheese, egg mayonnaise, tuna mayonnaise, meat, pate
- Omelette with grated cheese +/- meat with bread and butter/toast

- Jacket potato with cheese/tuna mayonnaise/baked beans/coleslaw/ egg mayonnaise
- Tinned macaroni cheese/ravioli/stew/casserole with mashed potato
- “Cream of” soup with additional milk/cream/cheese with bread/sandwich
- Boil in the bag or oven ready fish and chips/mashed potato

Puddings

- Milk puddings e.g. custard, rice pudding, semolina, sago with jam/sugar/cream
- Individual desserts, e.g. trifle, chocolate mousse, ice cream, full fat yoghurt
- Cake, pie or sponge pudding and custard or tinned or stewed fruit with custard
- Asian puddings such as seviyaan, halwa, kheer, barfi or gajrela.

To make fortified milk:

Take four tablespoons of dried milk powder, (e.g. Marvel, Five Pints) and make a paste with a little milk.

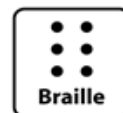
Whisk in the remainder of the one pint of full fat milk. Store in a refrigerator and use as ordinary milk.

Remember the 123 approach:

- 1 - Pint of full cream milk
- 2 - Between meal snacks per day
- 3 - Fortified meals per day

Dietitian: _____

Contact Number: _____



If you require a special edition of this leaflet

This leaflet is available in large print, Braille, on audio tape or disk and in other languages on request. Please contact:

Tel No: 0151 529 2906

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