

Food First for Vegan Diet

Adapting meals to prevent weight loss

If you have a poor appetite, it is best to aim to meet your nutritional needs through ordinary food and fluids. We call this approach **food first**.

This includes:

- Food fortification
- Snacks between meals
- Regular milky drinks
- Choosing high calorie and high protein foods/fluids.

Food fortification will increase the calorie and protein content of the diet. This will not increase the portion size but will aid weight gain and help to meet your nutritional needs.

This information leaflet contains ideas on nourishing snacks, drinks and recipe ideas to increase the calorie and protein content of your food.

Add a little extra to get a lot more

Everyday foods you can use to fortify meals without increasing the portion size

Matchbox size portion of hard vegan cheese (30g) adds an extra **80-95 calories**

- Grate in with mashed potatoes, soup or baked beans,
- Melted on toast
- Add to white sauces (made with milk alternatives)
- Add grated to a potato topping

Please note: melted cheese can become stringy so may not be suitable for people with swallowing problems.

2 teaspoons of dairy-free spread (10g) adds an extra **50-60 calories**

- Add to potatoes or vegetables
- Spread thickly on bread or toast
- Add on pasta, spaghetti, or rice

1 heaped teaspoon (6g) of sugar adds an extra **25 calories**

- Add to breakfast cereals
- Add into drinks e.g. tea, coffee, smoothies, milkshakes
- Add to puddings e.g. soya puddings, dairy-free sponges

1 tablespoon (15mls) of Oat cream adds an extra **~22 calories**,
1 tablespoon (15mls) or Soya cream adds an extra **~25 calories**.

- Add to mashed potato, soup, dahl
- Add to puddings and yoghurts or with fruit
- Add into milk-alternative based drinks e.g. coffee, tea, vegan hot chocolate, smoothies or milkshakes
- On breakfast cereals

1 teaspoon (5g) of pea protein powder adds an extra **18-20 calories and ~4g protein***

- Add to 200mls of full fat milk and use in sauces, soups, drinks, puddings, porridge and breakfast cereals
- Add into creamy yogurt

Alternatively make up 1 pint of fortified milk by adding 3-4 teaspoons (15-20g) of pea protein powder to 1 pint of your chosen milk-alternative and whisk until dissolved. This can then be kept in the fridge to be used throughout the day.

***Pea proteins used to estimate nutritional content were: Pulsin Pea Protein, MyProtein Pea (isolate), Bulk Powders Super Pea Isolate, The Protein Works Pea Protein, Nature's Best Pea Protein.**

1 tablespoon (55g) of Coconut/Soya yogurt adds an extra **~30-70 calories and ~0-5g protein** (*These really vary so check the packet!*)

- Add to breakfast cereals
- Use to make milkshakes and smoothies
- Add to desserts
- Add in curries, dahl or sauces
- Eat on its own

1 heaped teaspoon (17g) of Maple Syrup adds an extra **45 calories**

- Add onto desserts soya puddings, dairy-free sponges
- Add into breakfast cereals, porridge
- Add to drinks to sweeten

1 heaped teaspoon (18g) of jam adds an extra **45 calories**

- Add to bread or toast
- Add to porridge oats
- Add to puddings e.g. soya puddings, dairy-free sponges

1 tablespoon (15mls) of cooking oil e.g. olive, vegetable, sunflower adds an extra **135 calories**

- Add to stews, curries, dahls, soups or on roasted vegetables
- Fry or roast foods instead of grilling or baking e.g. potatoes, meat-alternatives or vegetables.
- Add an oil-based dressing to salads

1 teaspoon (15g) of peanut butter adds an extra **92 calories and 4g protein**

- Spread on toast or bread
- Add to breakfast cereals or porridge
- Add to dairy-free yogurt or puddings
- Add into milkshakes or smoothies

Other Additions may include Golden Syrup, Hummus, Nuts and Seeds.

Avoid low fat, 'lite' or diet food products and use more high fat foods.

This will increase the calorie content of your food when your appetite is poor.

Breakfast Meal Ideas

Creamy Porridge

25g porridge oats
100mls fortified milk alternative
1 tablespoon single cream
1 heaped teaspoon sugar
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Scrambled Tofu

140g extra firm tofu
1 teaspoon dairy free spread
1 tablespoon fortified milk-
alternative
1 tablespoon soya/oat/coconut
cream

Yogurt & Golden Syrup

125g pot of soya/coconut yogurt
1 heaped teaspoon of golden syrup
1 handful of chopped mixed nuts
(You could also add fruit as well)

Cheesy Beans on toast

135g baked beans
(1/3rd of a large tin)
30g of vegan cheese
1 medium slice of toast
10g dairy free spread

The calories in these meals will vary depending which dairy alternatives you are using. To ensure you are getting the most from meals try the ones with the highest calories and protein per 100mls or grams.

Other breakfast Ideas include:-

- Toast with butter and peanut butter (*or other nut butters, marmite, dairy-free cheese spread, syrup*)
- Breakfast cereals made with fortified milk-alternatives (try cereal which contain nuts to increase the energy) (*note: check if any vitamin D added is not from animals*)
- A vegan cooked breakfast (including, scramble tofu, vegan meat alternatives, baked beans)
- Fruit juice - sweetened
- Fruit smoothie made with milk-alternatives
- Vegan cakes/muffins

Light Meal Ideas

Remember to always try to include a source of protein at each mealtime i.e. beans, lentils, chickpeas, soya protein, vegan Quorn, Tofu, nut butter.

Toast with either:-

- Nut butters
- Coconut/Soya Cheese (30g)
- Baked beans
- Scrambled Tofu
- Pasta/spaghetti in tomato sauce and vegan cheese

Jacket potato with a choice of fillings:-

- Vegan cheese
- Baked beans
- Lentils/Dhal
- Coleslaw made with vegan mayonnaise
- Vegan Spread
- Vegan Quorn/Soya Protein Chilli

Add vegan spread, olive oil, vegan-mayonnaise or nut butter to increase the calories and taste

Sandwiches with a choice of fillings:-

- Vegan meat alternatives (e.g. Vegan chicken pieces, sausages/bacon)
- Dairy Free Alternative Cheese (soft or hard cheese)
- Hummus
- Falafel
- Peanut butter (smooth or crunchy)
- Jam / chocolate spread (although this will not provide any protein)

Add Dairy-free mayonnaise, marmite or pickles to increase the calories and taste

More light meal Ideas:

- Cauliflower and vegan cheese
- Falafel
- Vegan Sausages, Veggie fingers/burgers (e.g. tofu or bean)
- with baked beans
- Pasta and vegan cheese
- Soups – add soya/oat/coconut cream, vegan-cheese or pea powder and serve with croutons/bread & vegan spread/oil

Main Meal Ideas

- Lentil/chickpea/Tofu and vegetable curry
- Pasta Bake with beans/vegan cheeses
- Lentil stews (could be topped with potatoes to make a vegan pie)
- Vegan Sausage and bean casserole
- Vegan Quorn chicken pieces in a vegan-cream sauce
- Spaghetti Bolognese/Chilli (made with soya protein/vegan Quorn) topped with vegan cheese
- Dahl with vegan cream
- Vegan (bean or tofu) burgers/sausages and chips

To increase the calorie content of these meals add some extra everyday food fortifying ingredients into each dish, as mentioned earlier

Nourishing Snack Ideas

All these snacks provide extra calories:

- Vegan puddings/ice creams
- Check all biscuits - some are vegan!
- Slice of vegan cake
- Vegan Ice-cream (e.g. soy)
- Vegan cereal/nut bars
- Vegan Jelly made with milk-alternatives
- Rice cakes with nut butter/hazelnut spread
- Nut butter and jam on toast
- Glass of fruit juice or milk-alternative
- Vegan crackers and dips e.g. hummus, guacamole, tahini
- Cubes of dairy-free cheese/soft dairy free cheese and crackers
- Crisps (depending on flavour)
- Nuts/seeds/dried fruit
- Vegan filled pastries
- Vegetable Bhaji, samosa or pakora

Nourishing Drink Ideas

In addition to balanced meals and food fortification, these drinks may be useful for those who require extra protein and calories to gain weight.

Milkshake (155 calories, 9g protein)*

150ml milk-alternatives
1 teaspoon (5g) of pea protein powder
1 scoop dairy-free ice cream

Flavourings which may also add extra nutrition e.g. fresh fruit, vanilla extract, vegan chocolate powder.

Add the pea protein powder to the milk and whisk to mix thoroughly. Mix in the ice-cream and flavourings (may need to be blended or left to soften so that it can be mixed easily).

Fruit drink (200 calories)

100ml fruit juice
100ml lemonade (non-diet variety)
1 scoop sorbet
1 tablespoon sugar

Blend all the ingredients together until smooth.

Fruit yogurt drink (270kcal, 14g Protein)*

1 pot soya fruit yogurt
140ml milk-alternative
1 teaspoon (5g) of pea protein powder
2 heaped teaspoons maple syrup

Mix the ingredients together and blend until smooth

Hot chocolate (120 calories, 11g Protein)*

200ml milk-alternative
1 teaspoon (5g) of pea protein powder
1 teaspoon of vegan hot chocolate shots
Sugar to taste (will add calories see above)

Warm the milk. Add the pea protein powder, the vegan chocolate powder and sugar and mix together.

**Calories calculated using Plain Soya Milk as the milk-alternative*

Also try coffee made with fortified milk-alternatives, fresh fruit juice or milk-alternatives on their own. These drinks will provide more energy and protein than teas and coffees made with water or cordial/squash.

Tips for increasing food intake

- ❖ Have smaller meals but more frequently throughout the day
- ❖ Have nourishing snacks and drinks between meals
- ❖ Do not overfill a plate at mealtimes but try a smaller plate and keep the portions smaller
- ❖ Do not fill up on low energy, filling foods like fruit and vegetables unless they are served with vegan; cream, ice-cream or vegan-cheese sauces
- ❖ Ensure the environment you are eating in is calm and peaceful
- ❖ Always try to have full fat/sugar versions of foods, unless you have diabetes
- ❖ Make foods look attractive. Have small helpings served on a small plate and garnish with parsley, lemon or tomatoes
- ❖ Sharp tasting foods are refreshing. Try fresh fruit, fruit juices, lemon squash or boiled sweets.
- ❖ An alcoholic drink if permitted by your Doctor/Health Professional, before a meal can help to stimulate your appetite
- ❖ Treat yourself to your favourite foods