

# Food First

## 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**

A matchbox size portion of hard cheese (30g) adds an extra **125 calories and 7.5g protein**

- Grate cheese in with mashed potatoes, soup or baked beans,
- Melted cheese on toast
- Add to white sauces
- Add grated cheese to a potato topping

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

2 teaspoons of butter (10g) adds an extra **70 calories**

- Add butter to potatoes or vegetables
- Spread thickly on bread or toast
- Add to white, cheese or parsley sauces
- Add on pasta or spaghetti

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., rice pudding, semolina or fruit

1 tablespoon (15mls) of single cream adds an extra **30 calories** and double cream (15mls) adds **65 calories**.

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

1 tablespoon (10g) of dried skimmed milk powder adds an extra **35 calories and 3.5g 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 tablespoons of dried skimmed milk powder to 1 pint of full fat milk and whisk until dissolved. This can then be kept in the fridge to be used throughout the day.

1 tablespoon (55g) of Greek yogurt adds an extra **73 calories and 3g protein**

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

2 tablespoons (30mls) of evaporated milk adds an extra **45 calories**

- Add onto desserts e.g. jelly, rice pudding
- Add into soup, breakfast cereals, porridge
- Use as a drink or in drinks as an addition or substitute for milk

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. rice pudding, semolina or sponge puddings

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. bacon, sausages, potatoes, fish, meat or vegetables.
- Add an oil-based dressing to salads

1 heaped teaspoon (17g) of honey adds an extra **50 calories**

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

***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 (230 calories)

25g porridge oats  
100mls fortified milk\*  
1 tablespoon single cream  
1 heaped teaspoon sugar

(You can use instant oats as an alternative)

### Scrambled egg (275 calories)

2 eggs  
1 teaspoon butter  
1 tablespoon fortified milk\*  
1 tablespoon double cream

### Creamy yogurt and honey (200 calories) Cheesy Beans (370 calories)

125g pot of Greek yogurt  
1 heaped teaspoon of honey

(Add fruit as an alternative)

135g baked beans  
(1/3<sup>rd</sup> of a large tin)  
30g hard cheese  
1 medium slice of toast  
10g butter

### **Other breakfast Ideas include: -**

- Toast with butter and jam (or peanut butter, marmite, cheese spread, honey)
- Breakfast cereals made with fortified milk
- Egg on toast
- A cooked breakfast
- Soft breads such as brioche, crumpets or muffins (butter and jam could be added)
- Pastries e.g. croissant, pain au chocolat
- Fruit juice - sweetened
- Fruit smoothie

## Light Meal Ideas

### **Toast with either: -**

- Pilchards in tomato sauce
- Sardines in tomato sauce
- Cheese (30g)
- Baked beans
- Egg
- Pasta/spaghetti in tomato sauce and cheese
- Hummus

### **Jacket potato with a choice of fillings: -**

- Cheese
- Baked beans
- Tuna and mayonnaise
- Coleslaw
- Butter
- Chilli con carne

*Add butter, olive oil, mayonnaise or salad cream to increase the calories and taste*

### **Sandwiches with a choice of fillings: -**

- Cold meats – ham, corned beef, chicken, tongue
- Tinned fish – tuna, mackerel, pilchards, sardines
- Cheese (soft or hard cheese)
- Egg
- Peanut butter (smooth or crunchy)
- Jam (although this will not provide any protein)
- Pate
- Meat spreads/fish paste
- Hummus

*Add mayonnaise, salad cream or pickles to increase the calories and taste*

### **More light meal Ideas:**

- Cauliflower cheese
- Corned beef hash
- Quiche
- Omelette
- Sausages with baked beans
- Fish fingers
- Macaroni cheese
- Soups – add cream, cheese or milk powder and serve with croutons/bread & butter

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

## Main Meal Ideas

- Fish pie
- Cottage or shepherd's pie
- Meat, fish or vegetable curry
- Macaroni cheese
- Meat stews
- Meat, vegetable, bean casseroles
- Sausage casserole
- Fish or chicken in a cream sauce
- Spaghetti Bolognese
- Dahl

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

## Nourishing Snack Ideas

All these snacks provide extra calories:

- A pot of rice pudding, custard, trifle, mousse, crème caramel or thick and creamy yogurt
- Instant whip desserts made with whole milk / fortified milk\*
- Slice of cake or cheesecake – Chocolate mini roll, malt loaf with butter, scone with jam and cream, muffins
- Ice-cream
- Egg mayonnaise or cheese on soft bread or crackers
- Biscuits (chocolate covered or cream filled are best)
- Jelly made with milk or blancmange
- Buttered tea cake
- Glass of fruit juice or milk
- Avocado or dips e.g. hummus, guacamole, sour cream
- Cubes of cheese
- Crisps
- Nuts
- Sausage roll
- Pork pie
- Scotch egg
- Bhaji, samosa or pakora

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## 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** (200 calories, 8g protein)

140ml full fat milk  
1 tablespoon of dried skimmed milk powder  
1 tablespoon milkshake powder (any flavour)  
1 scoop ice cream

Add the milkshake powder and dried skimmed milk powder to the milk and whisk to mix thoroughly. Mix in the ice-cream (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

(We used orange juice and lemon sorbet but feel free to experiment)

Blend all the ingredients together until smooth.

### **Fruit yogurt drink** (370 calories, 13g protein)

1 pot full fat fruit yogurt  
130ml full fat milk  
1 tablespoon dried skimmed milk powder  
2 teaspoons honey

Mix the ingredients together and blend until smooth

### **Hot chocolate** (220 calories, 11g protein)

200ml full fat milk  
1 tablespoon dried skimmed milk powder  
3 heaped teaspoons drinking chocolate  
Sugar to taste

Warm the milk. Add the dried skimmed milk powder, chocolate powder and sugar and mix together.

***Also try malted milk drinks, coffee made with fortified milk, fresh fruit juice or milk on its 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 cream, ice-cream or cheese sauce
- ❖ 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 the doctor, before a meal can help to stimulate your appetite
- ❖ Treat yourself to your favourite foods