

Patient information

Eating well with a small appetite (cardioprotective)

When you are unwell, you may find that your food intake decreases and that you have a smaller appetite. You may lose some weight too. If you are eating less it is very important that the food you do eat contains as much nourishment as possible.

During these times, low sugar, low fat food choices are **not appropriate**. It is important to eat little and often and include high protein and high calorie foods and drinks. This can help aid your recovery and help regain weight you may have lost.

Normal healthy eating can start again once you are fully recovered. This recovery process may take longer than you expect - if you have any concerns, contact your Doctor or Dietitian.

- **Eat little and often (every 2 to 3 hours)**
- **Have high protein foods at each meal**
For example: Lean cuts of meat (beef, lamb, pork, poultry), fish (particularly salmon, mackerel, tinned sardines, pilchards), eggs, yoghurts, lentils, pulses, beans, peas, nuts.
- **Fortify your food and drink to make it more nourishing**
For example:
Add cheese to sauces, soups, pasta dishes, potatoes, vegetables, scrambled eggs
Add skimmed milk powder to milk, mashed potato, sauces, custard, soups, yoghurt, smoothies
Add sugar/jam/honey/golden syrup to cereal, rice pudding, yoghurt, custard, vegetables
Add ground nuts/nut butter to cereal, sauces, smoothies, soups
Add oil/spread to vegetables, potatoes, in cooking, pasta, toast
- **Have a main course and a pudding at both lunchtime and evening meal**
Good pudding ideas include milk puddings (rice pudding, sago, tapioca), fromage frais, yoghurts, crème caramel, stewed fruit and custard, jellies and ice-cream
- **Drink at least 6-8 mugs of fluid daily.** Try to include nourishing drinks such as milk, milkshake, milky coffee, hot chocolate, Ovaltine, Horlicks, fruit juice or fruit smoothies. Aim to use 1 pint of milk per day - on cereals, in drinks, in sauces, in puddings etc.
- **Have a high calorie, high protein snack mid-morning and afternoon**
See ESHT cardioprotective snack ideas patient information leaflet for suggestions
- **Have five portions of fruit and vegetables per day. However, do not prioritise these over higher calorie/higher protein options.**

Generally the wider the variety of colours the greater the range of vitamins.

Fruit juice can count as one of your five portions of fruit and vegetables. Fruit can be blended into a smoothie drink with natural yoghurt or ice-cream.

If you are unable to manage to eat five portions of fruit and vegetables a day, consider taking an A-Z multivitamin and mineral supplement, available from a supermarket or pharmacy.

Sources of information

British Dietetic Association

Important information

This patient information is for guidance purposes only and is not provided to replace professional clinical advice from a qualified practitioner.

Your comments

We are always interested to hear your views about our leaflets. If you have any comments, please contact the Patient Experience Team – Tel: (01323) 417400 Ext: 5860 or by email at: esh-tr.patientexperience@nhs.net

Hand hygiene

The trust is committed to maintaining a clean, safe environment. Hand hygiene is very important in controlling infection. Alcohol gel is widely available at the patient bedside for staff use and at the entrance of each clinical area for visitors to clean their hands before and after entering.

Other formats

If you require any of the Trust leaflets in alternative formats, such as large print or alternative languages, please contact the Equality and Human Rights Department - Tel: (01424) 755255

After reading this information are there any questions you would like to ask? Please list below and ask your dietitian or other healthcare professional.

Reference

The Clinical Specialty/Unit that have agreed this patient information leaflet:
Nutrition and Dietetic Department. Tel. 01323 417 400 x4172

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