

# Food First Advice

Making your food work for you

## Food First:

Food is very important to help you maintain your health. It contains essential vitamins and minerals as well as protein to help the body repair itself and recover from illness.

Eating well also helps to maintain weight and to fight infections. However when you feel unwell you may not feel like eating – just when you need food the most!

## Poor Appetite?

- Eat little and often – try eating small frequent meals every 2-3 hours
- Don't skip meals – if you can't manage a meal, try a milky drink instead e.g. milkshake, hot chocolate and a small snack
- Feeling hungry? Make the most of it and eat more when you are feeling hungry e.g. if you are hungry most in the morning, try having a cooked breakfast, or snack if you find you are hungry between meals
- Eat first, drink later. Drinking with meals can make you feel fuller sooner
- Can't be bothered cooking? Choose ready-made oven/microwave meals or tinned foods
- A small glass of alcohol may stimulate your appetite – try having one 30 minutes before your meal (ask your doctor first to ensure it is suitable with any medications you take)
- Get out – fresh air can often help stimulate your appetite. Try going for a brief stroll or simply step outside for a while. Try to eat in a well ventilated room
- If possible try and make meal times a social time
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## Making the most of your food:

- Aim to have at least one pint of whole milk (blue top) a day – either by itself or in drinks and puddings. To get extra nourishment mix 4 heaped tablespoons of dried milk powder per pint of milk – this is called enriched milk
- Add cheese, cream or butter/margarine to vegetables, sauces, soups, and mashed potatoes
- Add extra sauces and gravies to meat, chicken and fish – eg white sauce, parsley sauce
- Use mayonnaise, salad cream, cheese, egg or avocado in your meals and snacks
- Making puddings, use enriched milk and add extra cream, honey or condensed milk
- Try to have a small glass of fruit juice a day – add extra sugar and dilute with water or lemonade to make a longer drink
- Avoid diet and low calorie products at this time – you can return to these once you are back to normal eating patterns. Try and choose full fat products –eg full fat milk and yoghurt
- Choose your favourite foods often – eating is to be enjoyed!
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## Why do I need to snack between my meals?

- Snacking between meals is very helpful if you have a small appetite as it helps to increase your overall intake of food and nutrients.
- In addition to your normal diet, try to have 2-3 snacks between meals.
- Try and eat small amounts regularly – eg breakfast, morning tea, lunch, afternoon tea, dinner and supper.

### Regular Options

- Cheese and crackers.
- Dried fruit and nuts.
- Muesli bar or Flapjack.
- Small packet of crisps.
- Sandwich with meat/cheese.
- Piece of fruit.
- Chocolate biscuits.
- Crackers and dip.
- Crumpets with spread.
- Cheese on toast.

### Very Soft and Puree Options

- Yoghurt.
- Custard.
- Chocolate or fruit mousse.
- Milky pudding.
- Mashed banana and custard.
- Creamed Rice.
- Jelly and ice cream.
- Fromage frais.
- Crème caramel.
- Self saucing pudding.

### Soft Options

- Scrambled eggs.
- Tinned fruit and ice cream.
- White crustless sandwich with creamy filling e.g. egg or tuna mayo/cream cheese/jam/smooth peanut butter.
- Pastry/pie softened with custard/cream.
- Porridge/soggy cereal with milk/double cream.
- Baked beans on toast.
- Soft, moist cake/muffin.

### Liquid Options

- Soup with milk/double cream.
- Glass of full fat milk (blue top).
- Glass of enriched milk (make by adding 4 tablespoons milk powder to full fat milk).
- Glass of fruit juice.
- Fruit smoothie (e.g. Innocent, supermarket brand).
- Milkshake.
- Soft drinks or cordial.
- Nourishing drinks (see 'Nourishing Drinks' Leaflet).

- Scone with clotted cream and jam.

## Stocking the Cupboard and Fridge

Choose products that are full fat and/or sugar otherwise told by your health care team.

Avoid diet or low calorie varieties unless

- Whole milk/full cream milk (blue top)
- Desserts, mousses, yoghurts, fromage frais, ice-cream and puddings
- Oils, margarines, butter and spreads
- Cheeses, both hard and spreadable
- Mayonnaise, salad dressings, coleslaw, dips etc.
- Cakes, crisps, biscuits – cream, chocolate, cheese
- Nuts\* and seeds (choose unsalted)
- Drinks^ - Lemonade, cola, cordials (choose diet varieties if you have diabetes)
- Jams, marmalade, lemon curd etc.

## Nourishing Drinks

### Getting more out of your fluids

Nourishing drinks provide you with extra energy and calories as well as fluid to keep you hydrated.

#### Why do I need nourishing drinks?

- You may have lost weight due to illness.
- You may need extra nourishment.
- You may have a poor appetite and find fluids easier to take.

#### Banana Smoothie

200mls full cream milk (blue top)  
 1 small ripe banana  
 1 scoop ice-cream  
 1 teaspoon sugar  
 Mash banana, add all ingredients, blend and serve chilled. Further ice cream can be added or try a teaspoon of honey for a sweeter taste.

#### Super shake

200mls full cream milk (blue top)  
 3 tablespoons (45ml) double cream  
 1 scoop ice-cream  
 4 teaspoons milk powder  
 2 teaspoons milk shake flavouring (e.g. Nesquick/Crusha)  
 Blend for 15 seconds, adding more flavouring if you like.

#### Malt Honey Milkshake

200mls full cream milk (blue top)  
 1 tablespoon honey  
 1 scoop-ice cream  
 1 teaspoon (5g) malted milk powder (e.g. Horlicks) or 1 tablespoon Milo  
 Blend for 15 seconds.

#### Fruit Blast

100mls fresh fruit juice  
 100mls lemonade  
 1 scoop ice-cream  
 1 tablespoon sugar  
 Mix together and serve chilled.

#### Yoghurt and Berry Smoothie

Small pot of Greek yoghurt  
 Handful of frozen berries  
 1 small banana  
 150mls full cream milk (blue top)  
 Blend until smooth.

#### Ready Made Drinks

These can be purchased from small stores and the supermarket

Mars, Mars Extra, Mars Active, Yazoo, Galaxy, Aero, Bounty, flavoured milk Smoothies and milkshakes

Many people fill up on drinks such as tea, coffee, Oxo, Bovril, fizzy drinks, packet soups and water when they are feeling unwell. These drinks offer little nutritional value and simply fill you up without providing any nutrition. The following suggestions provide you with an increase in energy and protein along with other essential nutrients.



## Nourishing Drinks continued

### Over The Counter Supplement Drinks

Over The Counter Supplement drinks are high energy and protein drinks that are available to buy from most supermarkets and some chemists.

There are two varieties including those that are “ready to drink” straight from the tin, or those that are powdered and need to be mixed with milk before consuming.

#### Ready to Drink

e.g. Nurishment□, Nutrament□, Supligen□

Serve these drinks chilled or over ice. You can incorporate them into your meals e.g pour over ice cream or add the neutral flavour to soups.

#### Powdered

e.g. Build Up□, Complan□

Make these according to the directions on the pack using full fat milk (blue top). For extra calories add 2 tablespoons of double cream and ice cream.

For a savoury option, Build Up soups are also available. For extra calories add 2 tablespoons of double cream, a dollop of margarine/butter or some extra vegetable oil.

Supplement name	Size	Energy (calories)	Protein	Fibre	Company
Supligen□	400 ml tin	440 kcal	16.4 g	None	Nestle
Nutrament□	356 ml tin	360 kcal	16.0 g	None	Novartis
Nurishment□	420 ml tin	428 kcal	21.0 g	None	Dunns River
Complan□	57g powder sachet made with 200 ml full fat milk	385 kcal	15.0 g	None	Complan Foods
Build Up□	38 g powder sachet made with 200 ml full fat milk	263 kcal	15.2 g	3g	Nestle
Build Up□ Soup	49 g powder sachet made with 150 ml boiling water	200 kcal	7.5 g	3g	Nestle

These drinks are not designed to be used in place of meals; they are intended to provide a ‘top-up’ of energy and protein while your appetite and/or oral intake is poor. They should be taken in between meals or as a bed time drink so as not to spoil your appetite.