

## Further Information

For further information contact:

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics  
Western Isles Hospital  
Macaulay Road  
Stornoway  
Isle of Lewis  
HS1 2AF

Tel. 01851 708279  
Email: [wi.dietetics@nhs.scot](mailto:wi.dietetics@nhs.scot)  
[www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk](http://www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk)



## We are listening - how did we do?

We welcome your feedback, as it helps us evaluate the services we provide. If you would like to tell us about your experience:

- speak to a member of staff
- visit our website at: [www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/feedback](http://www.wihb.scot.nhs.uk/feedback) or share your story at: [www.careopinion.org.uk](http://www.careopinion.org.uk) or telephone 0800 122 31 35
- tel. 01851 704704 (ext 2236) or 0797 770 8701 Monday-Friday 9am-5pm (answerphone available).

Version: 5  
Produced by: Department of Nutrition & Dietetics, Western Isles Hospital.

### Disclaimer

The content of this leaflet is intended to augment, not replace, information provided by your clinician. It is not intended nor implied to be a substitute for professional medical advice. Reading this information does not create or replace a doctor-patient relationship or consultation. If required, please contact your doctor or other health care provider to assist you to interpret any of this information, or in applying the information to your individual needs.

© NHS Western Isles, 2013, 2015, 2018, 2020, 2024. All rights reserved.



Bòrd SSN nan Eilean Siar  
NHS Western Isles

Department of Nutrition and Dietetics

# Food First



Making the most of your food

## Introduction

If you have lost weight, have a poor appetite or have been missing meals, it is important to make the most of the foods you are eating, along with trying to eat more.

The following information will help you make sure your food is as nourishing as possible, help you gain weight, or prevent further weight loss until you are feeling better. This is also known as food fortification.

If you have diabetes or high cholesterol, this information will conflict with advice that may have previously been given. However, ensuring that you are well nourished is more of a priority at present.

### **Please note.**

The advice in this booklet may not be suitable for some medical conditions, for example food allergies or swallowing problems for which you need individual advice.

If you have been advised to thicken fluids, please continue to do so.

The following is some useful general advice and tips.

## Eat often

- Eat smaller more frequent meals and snacks.
- Try to eat something every 2-3 hours.
- Set an alarm to remind yourself to eat.
- Eat in a relaxed environment.
- Make the most of the occasions when you feel hungry.



## Notes

## Shopping Tips

- Work out a plan of what you are going to eat over the next few days.
- Check your cupboards before you go - don't buy what you don't need.
- Discover the cheapest place to do your food shopping.
- Choose supermarket 'own brand' products.
- Buy foods in season.
- Remember, 'cheapest' is not always 'best', particularly with meat. It is often better to buy small quantities of good quality meat.



## If you get tired easily

- Have quick, easy meals.
- Buy ready meals, prepared sandwiches or tinned foods.
- Buy 'instant' meals e.g. rice, pasta mixes, to which you just add hot water.
- If possible, ask someone else to cook.
- Cook meals in advance and freeze them in single portions.



## Choose high calorie foods

- Frying foods will increase their calorie content.
- Avoid low fat products.
- Choose full fat dairy products such as full cream milk, butter and cream.
- Use foods high in sugar and avoid reduced sugar or diet products.
- Choose drinks which are higher in calories such as full cream milk, milky coffees, fruit juice, fruit smoothies, rather than tea, coffee and clear soups.



**Try not to drink fluids before meals  
as they can fill you up.**

## Other tips

- Try to get some fresh air before meals.
- Aim to take some gentle exercise daily, if you are able to.
- If you are a smoker, avoid smoking before meals as this could affect your appetite.
- If you are having dental problems or your dentures don't fit, contact your dentist.
- Remember to brush your teeth regularly.

## Food fortification - the basics

Simple changes to your meals and snacks will make a difference. For example:

- Use full cream or Channel Island milk.
- Aim to have 1 pint per day.
- Take as a drink or use it in sauces, puddings, tea and coffee.
- Add double cream to mashed potatoes, soups, puddings and sauces.
- Add butter/margarine to vegetables, mashed potato, pasta, spread generously on bread, crackers, scones and pancakes.



**Remember:**  
**Supermarket own brands are as good as big name brands - we're all watching prices and are on a budget.**

## Sample meal plan

### Breakfast

Cereal/porridge with full cream milk, cream and sugar.  
Toast with margarine/butter and cheese.  
Glass of orange juice.



### Mid morning

Scone/Pancake with butter/margarine and jam.  
Milky coffee.

### Lunch

Cheese omelette and tomato.  
Mousse.  
Glass of milk.



### Mid afternoon

Milky drink.  
Slice of cake.

### Evening meal

Steak pie with roast potatoes and vegetables.  
Custard/rice pudding with cream.  
Glass of fruit juice.



### Bedtime

Milky drink/malted drink/  
hot chocolate.  
Chocolate biscuits or oatcake and cheese.



## Puddings and desserts

- Milk puddings such as rice pudding, custard, semolina or tapioca.
- Jam or chocolate sponge, fruit crumble.
- Sticky toffee pudding with cream, ice cream or custard.
- Fruit with ice cream, evaporated milk, condensed milk, or jelly made with milk.
- Gateaux, meringue or cheesecake.
- Individual chocolate mousse, trifle, creme caramel or creme brulee.
- Yoghurt or fromage frais.
- Thick and creamy, luxurious yoghurts.

### Remember:

**Try to add extra double cream, yoghurt and sugar where you can. Have at least one pudding per day.**

## Vitamins

Even if your appetite is poor, try and have smaller portions of fruit and vegetables each day to make sure you are getting enough vitamins. The following are some ideas:

- Chopped banana or dried fruit with breakfast cereal or yoghurt.
- Vegetable soup with added cream, croutons, grated cheese.
- Tomato, tomato salsa as part of a filling for a sandwich.
- Avocado pear.
- A portion of vegetables with a main meal, adding sauce, butter and grated cheese for extra calories.
- Roasted vegetables.
- A glass of fruit juice
- Fruit smoothie.
- Stewed, tinned or fresh fruit as part of a pudding.
- Fruit cake



**If you are unable to take fruit and vegetables you will need to take a vitamin and mineral table daily. Talk to your community nurse, GP or dietitian about this.**

- Grated cheese can be added to potatoes, vegetables and sauces. Use hard cheese or cream cheese generously on bread and crackers.
- Add sugar, jam, honey and syrup where possible, to increase the calorie content of meals, snacks and drinks.
- Aim to have at least one pudding every day.

**Plan your meals a couple of days in advance and don't buy more perishable food than you need.**

## Meal ideas

The following are some nutrition meal ideas:

- Cereals or porridge made with full cream, or Channel Island milk.
- Toast, rolls, pancakes, scones, brioche, croissants.
- Use a thick spread of butter or margarine, and then add a thick spread of one of the following: chocolate spread, lemon curd, peanut butter, cheese spread, jam, syrup or honey.
- Boil-in-bag fish, fish fingers, battered fish.
- Ready meals e.g. fish pie, cottage pie, cauliflower cheese, lasagne.
- Quiche, pies, sausage rolls, pizza, chicken kiev.



### Remember:

**Convenience foods can be useful when you are trying to increase your food intake. There is a wide variety available as frozen, chilled, packet or tinned ready meals.**

**Avoid low fat, low calorie options.**

## Snack ideas

Try to eat small nourishing snacks between your meals

- **Crisps with dips or hummus.**
- **Scone, pancake, crumpet, potato scone or malt loaf - add butter or margarine, jam, cream or cheese.**
- **Doughnut, flapjack, traybake or shortbread.**
- **Fruit loaf with butter.**
- **Ice cream.**
- **Chocolate-coated, cream or jam-filled biscuit.**
- **Thick and creamy yoghurts with jam, honey and lemon curd.**
- **Muffins pain au chocolat.**
- **Oatcakes and peanut butter.**
- **Handful of nuts, e.g. cashews, peanuts, pistachios.**
- **Dried fruit, trail mix, Bombay mix.**
- **Cheese and crackers.**
- **Pate on oatcakes.**
- **Chocolate bar.**
- **Individual desserts e.g. yoghurts, trifle, custard, rice pudding.**
- **Chocolate, toffees, sweets, tablet, fudge.**
- **Danish pastry, fruit tart.**



## Light meals

- **Soup - choose creamy varieties or add cream, cheese and croutons.**
- **Toast with cheese, eggs, beans, sardines, ravioli, pate, peanut butter and hummus.**
- **Omelette with cheese.**
- **Scrambled eggs on toast made with butter, margarine and cheese.**
- **Filled roll with fried egg, bacon, sausage, black pudding, or a combination of these.**
- **Sandwiches - made with a thick spread of butter or margarine. (See shopping list ideas leaflet).**
- **Tinner stew, tinned macaroni cheese, tinned curry, served with microwave rice or potatoes.**
- **Piece of cake or a muffin.**
- **Sausage roll, pork pie, Scotch egg.**
- **Jacket potato with cheese, baked beans, tuna mayonnaise.**
- **Pizza, quiche, burger with microwave chips.**

