

## Information for patients

### Eating with a low appetite

Sometimes you may experience having a low appetite – this can happen for all sorts of reasons; it might be because you have been unwell, are worrying about things, or because of a change in circumstances.

The following leaflet is designed to stop you losing any weight during this time, so you can remain strong for when you feel back to yourself again.

#### Top tips to stimulate your appetite:

- ✓ Stay in a routine – try to eat 3 small meals per day with 2-3 small snacks in between.
- ✓ Try new foods – your tastes may have changed and you could enjoy foods you previously didn't!
- ✓ If you are put off by the smell of cooking, try cold foods (such as sandwiches) or ready meals.
- ✓ Have snacks at the ready to nibble on when you feel like it.
- ✓ Try to have nourishing fluids – a glass of milk, a milky coffee or hot chocolate
- ✓ Don't worry about eating things at specific time, if you feel like having cereal at midnight – go for it!
- ✓ Try not to drink too much at mealtimes as it could fill you up, have a drink afterwards.
- ✓ Try to get out and about, going for a walk and having some fresh air could stimulate your appetite



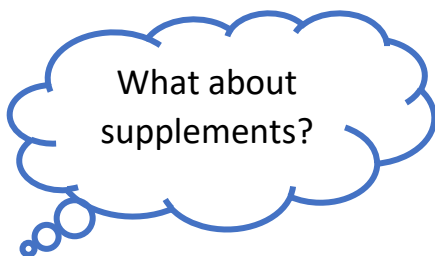
Nourishing snack ideas:

Sweet foods	Savoury foods
Thick and creamy yogurt	Cheese and crackers
Rice pudding	Crumpets or a muffin
Custard pot	Toast and peanut butter
Slice of cake or a muffin	Scotch eggs
Bowl of ice cream	Pork pie
Malt loaf or teacake with butter	Slice of quiche
Chocolate	Nuts
Sponge pudding	Samosa

There are some very simple ways of boosting the nutrition in your meals without needing to eat a lot more:

Nourishing food	Meal ideas:
<b>Butter</b> <i>Can use oil, soya butter or nut butters if dairy free</i>	Can be melted over vegetables Add to sauces, soups and mashed potatoes Use generously on your toast, crackers, teacakes or scones Stir into scrambled eggs Use to fry foods
<b>Cream</b> <i>Dairy free creams also available – oat and soya options often higher in calories</i>	Can add to sweet or savoury dishes Pour over a pudding or some fruit Add to mashed potato, scrambled eggs, sauces or soups Put into your porridge or add to milk in cereal Stir into yogurt Could have it whipped on top of a hot chocolate
<b>Cheese</b> <i>Dairy free cheeses are slightly lower in calories but can still provide a boost</i>	Use hard or soft cheese Add to mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs, soups and sauces Use to make a sauce for fish or chicken Add as an extra topping to a lasagne or cottage pie Have on your toast or crackers
<b>Skimmed milk powder</b> <i>If using dairy free milk, try to use sweetened, and ensure it is fortified with calcium.</i>	This can be added to milk or milky drinks to boost both the calories and the protein content. Add 4 tablespoons to 1 pint of milk OR Add 1-2 teaspoons to each milky drink

- ✓ Make sure you choose full fat options for yogurt, milk, butter and cream.



Often you can prevent weight loss without needing a supplement, however there are some available in supermarkets such as Complan or Meritene – always make these up with full cream milk.

If you continue to lose weight after following this advice, or your appetite reduces further then please see your GP as you may need to see a Dietitian.

**Lucy Blackstone**  
**Primary Care Dietitian**  
**DT 28530**