

## Poor Appetite

### Making the most of your food

#### 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. If you would like to take a multivitamin please check with your pharmacist that it is **complete** in vitamins and minerals.

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!

If you're diabetic, please consult your diabetes health professionals about the monitoring of your diabetes and medication.

#### Poor appetite?

- Eat little and often – eat small meals every two to three hours
- Don't skip meals – if you can't manage a meal, have a milky drink instead, such as a milkshake or hot chocolate, plus a small snack
- If your appetite is better at certain times of the day, aim to eat more then
- Keep ready-to-eat snacks close to your chair, bed or in your pocket
- Serve smaller portions of your meal to prevent feeling overwhelmed – you can always have more
- Have a ready meal or cook extra portions of meals when cooking and freeze them for use another day
- Drinking with meals can make you feel fuller sooner – have a drink when you have finished eating
- Too tired to cook? Choose ready-made oven/ microwave meals or tinned foods
- A small glass of alcohol 30 minutes before your meal may stimulate your appetite (ask your doctor or pharmacist first to ensure it is suitable with any medications you might take)
- Get out if you can – fresh air can often help stimulate your appetite. Go for a brief stroll or simply go outside for a while. Eating in a well ventilated room can also help

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- Aim to have at least one pint of whole milk a day – either by itself or in drinks and puddings. To get extra nourishment, mix four heaped tablespoons of dried milk powder with a small amount of milk to make a runny paste, then add it to the remainder of the pint of milk – this is called enriched or fortified milk
- For extra nourishment add cheese, cream or butter/margarine to vegetables, sauces, soups, and mashed potatoes
- Add extra sauces and gravy to meat, chicken and fish – for example, white sauce, parsley sauce
- Use mayonnaise, salad cream, cheese, egg or avocado in your meals and snacks
- Make puddings with enriched milk and add extra cream, honey or condensed milk
- Have a glass of fruit juice a day – dilute with lemonade if wanted
- Avoid diet and low calorie products at this time – you can return to these once you are back to normal eating patterns. Choose full fat products such as full fat milk and yoghurt
- Choose your favourite foods often – eating is to be enjoyed!

**If you are struggling to follow this advice, please contact the person who gave you this sheet.**