



The Dudley Group
NHS Foundation Trust

Dietary advice for people with diabetes who are underweight or who have experienced weight loss

Nutrition and Dietetics

Patient Information Leaflet

Introduction

This dietary advice sheet gives some general information for people who have diabetes, and who are underweight or who have experienced weight loss. If you need more detailed advice, or if you are following a special diet that makes it difficult to make these changes, please ask your GP to refer you to a registered dietitian.

How can I make the most of my food?

Using the advice in this leaflet will help you to make the most of your food. It is important that your body has enough calories (to give you energy) and protein.

If you want to gain weight, prevent weight loss or minimise weight loss, try to eat little and often. Eat small meals with snacks and nourishing drinks in between such as whole milk (blue top), milky coffee or low sugar hot chocolate powder made with whole milk.

Protein-rich food should be eaten three times a day if you are trying to put weight on. Examples of protein-rich foods include meat, fish, eggs, cheese, milk, yoghurt, beans, lentils, chickpeas and vegetarian alternatives to meat such as soya, tempeh and tofu.

It is important that you eat what you fancy when your appetite is poor. This means that you might want to treat yourself to small amounts of sugary food that you would usually limit. Please note that it is recommended that you avoid sugary drinks unless you are unable to tolerate solid food.

If you are concerned about high blood glucose levels, please speak to the health professional who helps you to manage your diabetes. They will be able to provide advice about medication to help keep blood glucose levels under control.

How can I add extra nourishment to my diet?

Here are some ideas:

Breakfast

- Full cooked breakfast, such as sausages, bacon, eggs and beans
- Baked beans on toast
- Scrambled egg on toast
- Breakfast cereal or porridge topped with:
 - Full fat yoghurt
 - Seeds and nuts
 - Cream or soya cream
 - Fortified milk (see section on 'Fortified milk')

Other meals

- Sardines in tomato sauce on toast
- Jacket potato with baked beans and cheese
- Egg mayonnaise sandwich
- Ham omelette with a slice of bread and butter or margarine
- Ready meals
- Salmon in a creamy sauce with vegetables and mashed potato, made with extra butter and whole milk
- Jerk chicken with a creamy sauce, fried plantain and callaloo
- Homemade meat, vegetable, lentil curry with extra paneer or cream added, and served with egg-fried rice or chapatti spread with butter

You can add extra nourishment to your meal by:

- Grating cheese over it
- Drizzling olive oil over pizza bases, pasta and salad
- Adding nuts, for example, peanuts to stir fries
- Adding seeds and nuts to salads
- Adding a creamy sauce
- Adding mayonnaise to sandwiches
- Adding cream, soya cream, whole milk or coconut milk to soup

- Adding the following to your mashed potato:
 - Extra butter or margarine
 - Grated cheese
 - Cream or soya cream
 - Ghee
 - Paneer

Snack ideas

- Handful of nuts
- Full fat yoghurt
- Cheese, peanut butter or hummus on biscuits, oatcakes, crispbread or crackers
- Small portion of cereal
- Finger food such as sausage rolls, scotch eggs, quiche, pakoras, spring rolls
- Samosas with full-fat yoghurt dip
- Corn, pineapple or plantain fritters
- Avocado
- Greek yoghurt and a small fun-size chopped banana
- Glass of whole milk and malted milk biscuits

Fortified milk

It is easy to add extra calories and protein to milk. Simply make up one pint of milk (ideally whole milk) with four tablespoons of skimmed milk powder. To do this, start by adding a small amount of milk to the powder to make a paste and then add the rest of the milk to make the pint.

This can be covered and stored in the fridge for use in drinks and food throughout the day. You can also add one teaspoon of milk powder to each hot drink, for example, a cup of tea or coffee.

Nourishing drinks

- Milk – try to have at least one pint a day (whole milk is the most nourishing)
- Calcium-enriched milk alternatives, for example, soya milk, coconut milk
- Milky drinks made with whole milk such as milky coffee, Horlicks Light, Ovaltine Light, low sugar (light) hot chocolate powder
- No-added-sugar liquid milkshake flavourings (powder or liquid) added to whole milk



What if making the most of my food is not enough?

If you are struggling to make the most of your food using the advice in this leaflet, and/or still not reaching your goals, you may need to consider using nutritional supplements. Some of these can be obtained at pharmacies or at supermarkets without a prescription (this is known as ‘over the counter’). Your doctor can prescribe some nutritional supplements but it is advisable to seek advice from a dietitian too.

Nutritional supplements sold over the counter e.g. Build-up or Complan

- These are packets of powder that can be stored ready for use when required
- Savoury soups are made using hot water
- Sweet shakes are made using milk
- Drink after meals, or as meal replacement if you are unable to prepare a meal or your appetite is particularly poor

Prescription nutritional supplements

- Milky varieties are best for people with diabetes
- Have them after meals
- Can be stored in a cupboard unopened
- Taste better chilled
- Can be added to food
- Can be refrigerated for 24 hours after opening which allows you to split them into smaller doses if you want

Vitamins and minerals

Normally, it is recommended that people eat five different portions of fruit and vegetables a day. A portion of fruit is what fits in your hand and a portion of vegetables is two to three tablespoons. If you are struggling to eat enough due to a poor appetite, and you are not taking any nutritional supplements containing vitamins and minerals, you may wish to consider talking to your GP or pharmacist about taking a vitamin and mineral supplement.

What if I cannot tolerate solid food?

If you cannot manage solid food, have drinks containing carbohydrate such as:

- Drinking yoghurt
- Milkshakes
- Smoothies
- Fruit juice
- Sports drinks
- Normal (not sugar-free) squash
- Normal (not sugar-free) pop



If you are struggling to keep your blood glucose between 4 to 13.9mmol/l, please contact the health professional who helps you to manage your diabetes for advice because you may need to adjust your medication.

If you have any questions, or if there is anything you do not understand about this leaflet, please contact:

Dietitians at Russells Hall Hospital on 01384 244017
(8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday)

Community dietitians at Stourbridge Health and Social Care Centre on
01384 323749 (8.30am to 4.30pm, Monday to Friday)

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number:
01384 456111

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dudleygroup.nhs.uk/patients-and-visitors/patient-information-leaflets/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email
patient.information@dgh.nhs.uk

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

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0800 073 0510。

Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

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Aceasta broșura poate fi pusă la dispoziție tipărită cu caractere mari, versiune audio sau în alte limbi, pentru acest lucru vă rugăm sunați la
0800 073 0510.

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