

A soft nourishing diet

Other formats

If you need this information in another format such as audio CD, Braille, large print, high contrast, British Sign Language or translated into another language please contact the PALS desk on 01271 314090 or at ndht.pals@nhs.net.

Ways to improve your intake

- Eat little and often (every couple of hours, have a small meal or snack): 3-4 smaller meals and 2-3 snacks.
- Eat more when your appetite allows – is there a certain time of day you are more hungry?
- Choose items from the ‘Things to add’ section for ideas on how to boost the energy in your meals wherever possible.
- Choose high energy foods (avoid low fat, diet, reduced sugar, etc.).
- Choose options you ‘fancy’ or your favourites.
- Get some fresh air before your meal – go outside, perhaps for a walk before a meal.
- Avoid cooking meals with strong smells if they reduce your appetite – convenience or cold foods may help.
- Use convenience foods to prevent you getting tired preparing food.
- Try strong flavoured foods (such as spicy, sweet, coffee, acidic).
- Keep portions small (as large ones can be off putting) – you can have seconds if you feel up to it.
- Make it pretty – attractive food will help tempt your appetite!
- Try to have a pudding after your meal.
- Relaxing at meal times can help you to manage more.
- Eat in the company of others if you can – try to match their pace of eating.
- Have regular nourishing drinks but avoid drinking large amounts at mealtimes.
- Add vegetables into meals but eat high energy foods on the plate first.

Meal ideas

- Breakfast cereal that goes soggy when soaked in milk
- Lasagne
- Macaroni cheese
- Cottage pie
- Shepherd's pie
- Fish pie
- Moussaka
- Stew
- Spaghetti bolognese
- Mince with mashed potato and baked beans
- Soup ('cream of' versions tend to be higher energy)
- Avocado with bread (crusts cut off) with or without smoked salmon or scrambled eggs
- Corned beef hash
- Chicken supreme
- Omelette
- Pasta with fish in a creamy sauce

Convenience food options

- Softer ready meals
- Softer tinned meals (e.g. chunky soups, stew, beans and sausages)
- Instant mash
- Full fat (and sugar) yogurt
- Scrambled/poached/boiled eggs
- Tinned spaghetti
- Cereal made soggy by soaking in milk/instant porridge
- Tinned or ready-made rice/semolina pudding

Snack ideas

- A nourishing drink (milky drink, coffee made with milk instead of water, fruit juice, smoothie, milkshake, fizzy drink, etc.)
- Yogurt
- Individual pudding (e.g. tiramisu, mousse, blancmange, trifle, custard)
- Jelly and ice-cream
- Soft fruit (e.g. banana, tinned peaches, stewed apple)
- Soup (tinned soups could be an easy option)
- Cheese spread or meat paste on bread (crusts cut off)
- Jelly sweets
- Brioche
- Soft cake slices, sponge pudding
- Crustless quiche

Things to add

Adding these foods in or on your meals can help boost the calories, giving you more energy from the food you eat. Try adding to drinks, soup, smoothies, cereal, porridge, sauces, cooked vegetables or anywhere you can sneak them in to boost your calories!

Savoury	Neutral	Sweet
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Grated cheese (may need to avoid stringy types such as mozzarella) • Mayonnaise/salad cream • Condensed soup • Cheese spread • Jar cooking sauces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Full fat milk • Skimmed milk powder (enrich your usual milk by mixing in up to 4 tablespoons) • Full fat yogurt • Ground almonds • Smooth peanut butter (or other nut butters) • Olive oil • Cream • Jar cooking sauces • Tahini 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sugar • Jam • Honey/golden syrup/syrups • Chocolate spread • Condensed or evaporated milk

Practical tips

- Small sips of drink or adding sauces to meals can make meals easier to swallow.
- Struggling to take medications? Liquid options may be available; speak to your GP or pharmacist.
- The texture of certain foods can be made soft by soaking them in liquids.
- Using a food blender (or hand held “whizzer”) can make chunkier food easier to manage. Adding a sauce can make this easier.
- If you are struggling to eat enough and worried about your nutrition, speak with your dietitian.

Further information

Dietetics Department 01271 322306

Wiltshire Farm Foods 0800 077 3100 www.wiltshirefarmfoods.com

Oakhouse Foods 0333 370 6700 www.oakhousefood.co.uk

Alimento 0800 083 4446 www.alimento.co.uk

Top Meals on Wheels 01237 424257 www.topmealsonwheels.co.uk

PALS

The Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) ensures that the NHS listens to patients, relatives, carers and friends, answers questions and resolves concerns as quickly as possible. If you have a query or concern call 01271 314090 or email ndht.pals@nhs.net. You can also visit the PALS and Information Centre in person at North Devon District Hospital, Barnstaple.

Have your say

Northern Devon Healthcare NHS Trust aims to provide high quality services. However, please tell us when something could be improved. If you have a comment or compliment about a service or treatment, please raise your comments with a member of staff or the PALS team in the first instance.

‘Care Opinion’ comments forms are on all wards or online at www.careopinion.org.uk.

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