

# Poor Appetite

## Introduction

The ward staff have identified you as being nutritionally vulnerable when you were admitted to hospital. Loss of appetite is a common symptom of illness which may result in you losing weight and become malnourished.

### What causes loss of appetite?

- Vomiting and nausea.
- Constipation.
- Oral thrush (an infection in your mouth).
- Taste changes (this can be caused by medications and treatment).

### Consequences of a Poor Appetite

- Longer hospital stay.
- Slower wound healing.
- Increased risk of infections.
- Decreased mobility.

### Improving your appetite helps:

- Improving your appetite helps:
- Reduce hospital admission.
- Heals wounds and broken bones quicker.
- Improves mobility resulting in you feeling stronger and better in yourself.

### If you are identified as nutritionally vulnerable, you will be put on a higher protein menu

- Eat the main part of your meal first (e.g. meat, fish, egg, potatoes) before eating the soup or the sweet, as this part of the meal contains the most calories and protein
- Eat little and often by ordering extra items from the menu (e.g. biscuits, cheese and crackers, scone with butter and jam) to eat between meals.
- Avoid ordering low calorie and low protein meals such as salads, vegetables and fruit.
- Add flavour to meals by ordering tomato ketchup, brown sauce, and salad cream – just write these on your menu.
- Increase the calorie and protein contents of soup and other meals by ordering a pot of grated cheese to sprinkle order. You can write this on your high protein menu.

- If you feel nauseous, choose plain foods (jacket potato) or cold foods (sandwiches).
- If you have problems chewing, choose the SOFT options on the menu order extra gravy / sauces to moisten your food.
- The best choice of desert is a milky pudding or sponge with custard. If having tinned fruit, ask for custard or ice cream. To increase the calories further, sprinkle with sugar.
- Ask for a slice of toast or a bowl of cereal at supper time. The housekeeper can help you with this.

### What could family and friends bring in?

- Visitors may like to bring in food to help you get better. Here are some ideas that can be easily stored in your locker:
- Biscuits – e.g. shortbread, chocolate digestives, jam cream varieties.
- Small boxes of breakfast cereals or cereal bars.
- Skimmed milk powder – this can be mixed into milky drinks or sprinkled over breakfast cereal.
- Cake – e.g. sponge, madeira, flapjack.
- Breadsticks, nuts, crisps or popcorn.

### Other tips to improve your dietary intake

- Try to sit in your chair at mealtimes to make it easier to eat.
- If you cannot get out of bed, then ensure that you are sat up and in a comfortable position.
- If you need assistance with your meal, then ask a nurse, health care assistant or ward housekeeper to help you.
- Freshen up before meals using cleansing wipes provided on the ward.
- If you require specially adapted cutlery, as the ward staff so that can be provided.
- If you have problems swallowing food or liquids, report this to the ward staff.
- If you follow any dietary restrictions for a medical condition, inform the ward staff.

## Enjoy your meal!

### Useful Contacts:

**Patient Relations Department: 01253 955589**

### Options available

If you'd like a large print, audio, Braille or a translated version of this booklet then please call: **01253 955588**



#### Our Four Values:

People Centred	Positive
Compassion	Excellence



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