

Information for kidney patients

Eating with a small
appetite

If you are eating less or have lost weight without planning to, simple changes to what you eat and drink may help you gain weight, have more energy and may mean you are more able to fight off infection.

You may have previously been advised to restrict some foods in your diet, but if you have a small appetite or are losing weight, there is no need to follow these restrictions so closely.

You can choose to eat any of the foods contained in this diet sheet unless otherwise advised by your dietitian.

It is still important not to add salt to your cooking or meals and to follow your fluid restriction if you have been given one.

Helpful hints

- Eat little and often: aim for three small meals and two to three snacks a day.
- Have your main meal at the time of day you feel best.
- Keep a store of easy to prepare foods, eg sandwiches, tinned foods, cereal.
- Try eating cold foods if the smell of cooking is putting you off eating.
- Don't fill up on fruit and vegetables as they are low in protein and energy.
- Keep snacks within easy reach.
- Drink with or after your meal as drinking before a meal can fill you up.
- If you are able to, monitor your weight once a week. Try to weigh yourself at the same time each day using the same scale.

Increasing your calorie and protein intake

- Try to have protein (meat, fish, egg, chickpeas, lentils or tofu) at least two times a day.
- Fry or add oil, butter or margarine to foods, eg vegetables, eggs, rice, fish and meat.
- Add cream, salad cream or mayonnaise to boiled or mashed potatoes.
- Add cream, butter or margarine to sauces.
- Add pasta, grated cheese, croutons, chickpeas or lentils to 'cream of', lentil or meat based soups (a maximum 150ml portion, once a day).

- Add butter, margarine or olive oil to vegetables.
- Try to have a pudding once or twice a day.

Breakfast ideas

- porridge or cereal with full fat milk plus sugar, cream, honey or syrup – avoid dried fruit and bran as they are high in potassium
- toast, croissant, English muffin or Danish pastry with butter, jam, honey or marmalade
- eggs, bacon, sausage with toast or bread.



Light meal ideas

- toast with scrambled egg, bacon, sausage or boneless sardines
- sandwich or roll with egg mayonnaise, tuna mayonnaise, chicken mayonnaise or cheese
- cheese omelette with bread or toast
- tinned ravioli, stew or casserole with mashed potato
- 'Cream of' soup (maximum 150ml) with bread or a sandwich
- lentil dal and paneer with rice or chapatti.



Puddings

- individual fruit or lemon meringue pie
- sponge pudding or crumble and cream
- tinned fruit and cream
- trifle or mousse
- cheesecake
- jam tart
- rice pudding or custard.



Snacks

Savoury

- crackers or breadsticks with butter, cheese or dips
- mini pork pie, sausage roll, falafel or scotch egg
- toast or bagel with butter or cream cheese
- garlic bread
- pretzels or popcorn
- samosa
- maize or corn based crisps

Sweet

- biscuits, cakes or muffins (avoid chocolate and nuts as they are high in potassium)
- doughnut or flapjack
- iced bun or jam tart
- toast, teacake or bagel with jam
- Danish pastry or croissant
- jelly sweets or marshmallows.

Nutritional supplements

If you are underweight or have lost a large amount of weight, your dietitian or doctor may prescribe supplement drinks, for example Ensure®, Nepro®, Fortisip®. These supplement drinks contain energy, protein, vitamins and minerals and are designed to be taken in addition to food to help prevent further weight loss and promote weight gain. If you have a fluid restriction it is important to prioritise your supplement drinks over other drinks, eg water, tea, and coffee.

Tips for taking your supplements

- Try a variety of types, eg milkshakes or juice.
- Try a variety of flavours.
- They taste best when cold.
- Make juice supplements into ice lollies and milk-based supplements into smoothies.
- Sip slowly throughout the day.

Note for people with diabetes

If you have diabetes, you will need to continue to avoid sugary foods. You can however still increase your energy intake by using more fats or oils.

Important

After one month, if you continue to lose weight and your appetite does not improve, it is very important to let your dietitian, hospital doctor or GP know.

Further information

For more information about the nutrition and dietetic service at the Royal Free London visit our website:

www.royalfree.nhs.uk/services/services-a-z/therapy-services/nutrition-and-dietetics

For more information about the kidney services at the Royal Free London, please visit our website at:

www.royalfree.nhs.uk/services/services-a-z/kidney-services/

If have any feedback on this leaflet or require a full list of references for it, please email:

rf.communications@nhs.net.

This leaflet is also available in large print. If you need this leaflet in another format – for example Braille, a language other than English or audio – please ask a member of staff.

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