

# Malnutrition



## WHAT IS MALNUTRITION?

Malnutrition literally translates as 'poor nutrition' which can either mean that you are not getting enough nutrients (under-nutrition) or that you are getting more nutrients than you need (over-nutrition). For the purpose of this leaflet, we are focussing on under-nutrition.

## HOW MANY PEOPLE DOES IT EFFECT?

It is estimated that malnutrition affects over 3 million people in the UK\*. Of these, about 1.3 million are over the age of 65. It is also estimated that between 25-34% of patients admitted to hospital and 30-42% of residents admitted to care homes are at risk of malnutrition\*.

\*British Association for Parenteral and Enteral Nutrition (BAPEN)

## WHY DOES IT EFFECT THEM?

There are a number of reason why people become malnourished such as having a poor appetite, as a result of an illness, having poor sense of taste and smell or it could be as a consequence of disorders like dysphagia (swallowing difficulties). It could also be because food is presented poorly, meals are served at unsuitable times, there is no choice of portion size, food is served at an inappropriate temperature or there is a lack of snacks and nourishing drinks through out the day.

## WHAT TO LOOK OUT FOR

Some of the common signs of malnutrition include unintentional weight loss, general lack of interest in food, loss of appetite, low body weight (body mass index of less than 18.5) feeling weak, tired and regularly being ill but taking longer to recover than usual.

## HOW TO HELP

Food comes first. Although nutritional supplements can play a useful role for some people, using the 'food first' approach is advised. Use every day ingredients to fortify meals and snacks with extra calories and protein. Increasing the energy content of meals without increasing the portion size is particularly useful for people with smaller appetites.

Food fortification can be more practical and cheaper than using nutritional supplements. Offering fortified small snacks, meals and drinks regularly throughout the day should help to stimulate appetite. Find out favourite foods and aim to fortify them with extra nutrients. Taste the food first, would you eat it? If not, then why would your residents eat it?

**Consider the food swaps below:**



# Malnutrition



## SNACKING

Snacks between meals can be a really helpful way of increasing overall food intake, particularly for people with smaller appetites. Offer 2-3 snacks in between meals each day and some milky drinks too .

### Savoury Snacks

- Cheese and crackers
- Small bag of crisps
- Buttered toast, crumpets or toasted teacake
- Cheese on toast
- Pate on toast
- Buttered malt loaf

### Sweet Snacks

- Chocolate biscuits
- Dried fruit and nuts
- Slice of cake
- Fruit with cream
- Fruit scone with cream and jam
- Choc-Ice

### Milky Drinks

- Coffee made with whole milk
- Hot chocolate made with whole milk
- Malted drinks such as Ovaltine
- Ice Cream or milk-based smoothies

## A TYPICAL DAY'S FORTIFIED FOOD DIARY

	FOOD	CALORIES	FOODS TO FORTIFY	EXTRA CALORIES
<b>Breakfast</b>	Porridge	155 calories	Sugar	20 calories
	1/2 slice of Buttered Toast	75 calories	Cream	30 calories
<b>Mid Morning</b>	Digestive Biscuit	70 calories	Butter	40 calories
			Cheese	60 calories
<b>Lunch</b>	Minced Beef	210 calories		
	Carrots	10 calories	Butter	40 calories
	Boiled Potato	80 calories	Butter	40 calories
	Tinned Peaches in Syrup	55 calories	Evaporated Milk	80 calories
<b>Mid Afternoon</b>	Sponge Cake	90 calories	Jam	50 calories
<b>Dinner</b>	Soup	75 calories	Cream	70 calories
	Scrambled Egg	110 calories	Cheese	120 calories
	1/2 slice of Buttered Toast	75 calories		
<b>Supper</b>	Custard Cream	50 calories		
<b>Milk Allowance</b>	2/3 Whole Pint of Milk	255 calories	Milk Powder	100 calories
	<b>TOTAL CALORIES</b>	<b>1310</b>	<b>FORTIFIED CALORIES</b>	<b>2060</b>