

Build Yourself Up!



Fortified Dietary Advice for Diabetes

Have you recently lost weight? Perhaps you are not managing to eat as much or as well as you used to?

This leaflet may contain dietary advice which is different to previous guidance you have been given for managing diabetes. However, building yourself up is what matters most now. Your dietitian or diabetes team will advise you if you need to return to your usual diet.

Eating well is essential to help you recover from illness or during medical treatment. Lack of a nourishing diet can make you more likely to become ill or delay the healing process. It can be difficult to eat if you don't feel hungry, however not eating enough or well enough may make you feel even more unwell and lead to further weight loss.

As you have recently lost weight, it is particularly important that your diet should contain plenty of protein and energy. At the same time, you should aim for your blood sugar levels to remain within an acceptable range. Ask your GP /

Practice Nurse / or Diabetes Specialist Nurse (DSN) what you should aim for your daily blood sugar levels or long term diabetes test (HbA1c) to be.

If your diabetes is not well controlled, healing of any wounds or pressure ulcers may take longer. If you have symptoms or you know your blood sugar levels are high, talk to your GP / Practice Nurse or DSN. They will be able to start or adjust diabetes medication and advise accordingly.



What should I have?



Eat 'little and often', try small, nourishing meals, snacks and drinks regularly throughout the day.

Include starchy foods at every meal (e.g. porridge, plain breakfast cereals, bread, potatoes, rice or pasta). Starchy foods are essential for people taking insulin or sulphonylurea tablets (e.g. Gliclazide, Glimpiride, Tolbutamide).

Try to have a protein food at every meal, e.g. eggs, milk, cheese, beans, nuts, meat, fish, or vegetarian alternatives such as soya, tofu or Quorn. Don't forget tinned meats and tinned fish are quick and easy to prepare.

Aim to drink at least 8 glasses / large mugfuls of no-added sugar fluid every day eg water, tea, milky coffee, no-added sugar squash.

Avoid non-diet fizzy drinks and Lucozade. Don't add sugar to hot drinks, use a sweetener instead.

Limit fresh fruit juice to one small glass daily.

It is not necessary to exclude sugar completely. A small amount of the daily calories in your food can come from

- 1-2 biscuits
- small portion of cake
- a pudding such as fruit crumble & custard
- a milk pudding



Your priority at the moment is to **not** lose weight

Food Fortification

Food fortification means adding extra nourishment (calories/protein) to your food without increasing the amount you need to eat.

How to fortify foods

- choose full cream (blue top) milk which has the highest number of calories - aim to drink 1 pint / 500mls per day
- to fortify milk, add 2-4 heaped tablespoons of dried milk powder to 1 pint full cream milk and blend / mix until smooth. Chill in the fridge and then use as normal
- add 2-3 teaspoons of dried milk powder directly to your portion of soup, milk pudding or custard
- adding fats to food eg cream to soup will give you more calories. Choose full fat products rather than 'diet' 'reduced / low fat' or 'healthy eating' varieties as these provide more calories
- add spread / margarine, or 1-2 teaspoons of vegetable oil / olive oil to vegetables, hot pasta, mashed potato, jacket potato etc



How to fortify foods

- add grated cheese to soup, mashed potato, scrambled eggs, omelette, hot vegetables etc
- chips and roast potatoes are higher in calories and should be included regularly
- serve main meals with a creamy sauce e.g. cheese, parsley or white sauces. Make up a packet sauce with full cream milk and sprinkle grated cheese on top or buy ready prepared sauces
- add cream to soups or puddings e.g. stewed fruit, fruits canned in juice, custard, rice puddings etc
- make a milk jelly with fortified milk / evaporated milk and sugar free jelly crystals
- choose sandwich fillings eg egg or tuna made with full fat mayonnaise



Ideas for snacks between meals and at bedtime

- toast with spread and either peanut butter, cream cheese or a small amount of jam
- a cheese, egg or tuna & mayonnaise sandwich
- sardines, cheese or baked beans on toast
- cheese on its own or with crackers / crispbreads / crisps
- full fat yogurt or fromage frais
- fruit & custard with added cream
- small bowl of creamy soup and a bread roll
- a toasted teacake, 1 crumpet
- a bowl of cereal and milk



It is often easier to drink rather than to eat when you are unwell, try to choose nutritious drinks

- full fat (blue top) milk / fortified full fat milk
- savoury Build-Up / Meritene or Complan Soup available from the chemist or large supermarkets
- milky drink eg Options or Cadbury's Highlights made with full cream / fortified milk and 1-2 biscuits, e.g. rich tea or gingernut



If you have no appetite

Any illness can cause a lack of appetite. It can be difficult to eat if you are not hungry, but it is important to try. The following may help:

- try to have a small portion of food every few hours during the day
- take advantage of times when you do feel hungry, keep snacks handy to nibble on, such as crisps, nuts, cheese cubes, plain biscuits, yogurts or milky drinks
- cooking smells may affect your appetite so let someone else do the cooking if possible. If you prepare food yourself, use foods that are quick and easy to prepare eg ready meals
- if nauseous, try cold foods as these have less smell
- don't be afraid to eat at odd times of the night and day
- avoid large volumes of fluid at mealtimes, these might fill you up and prevent you from eating your food
- eat meals slowly, chew the food well and relax for a little while between courses and after each meal
- have your meals in a room where you feel relaxed
- if it is safe for you to have alcohol, try a small glass of wine or sherry with a meal



If you are caring for someone who has both diabetes & dementia

It is not necessary to exclude sugar completely from the diet of someone with diabetes and dementia, especially if this causes distress or increases confusion. Cakes, ice-cream or other familiar sweet foods may be necessary to prevent weight loss if healthier carbohydrate foods (eg boiled new potatoes in their skins / seeded bread / rice / pasta) are refused.

If the person's blood glucose levels rise, contact their GP / Community Nurse or DSN. A review of their diabetes medication or doses may be required. If food fortification measures have been tried and the person is still losing weight, it is essential to ask the GP to review the person's diabetes control. The person may also require an individual referral to a dietitian.

Adequate control of diabetes, is essential to prevent weight loss and promote weight gain in frail older people with diabetes.

Useful Addresses and Websites

Diabetes UK

Macleod House, 10 Parkway, London NW1 7AA
Email: info@diabetes.org.uk Website: www.diabetes.org.uk
Tel: 0345 123 2399

A comprehensive source of information and advice on diabetes for Bedfordshire

www.bedfordshirediabetes.org.uk



Nutrition and Dietetics
Dunstable Health Centre, Priory Gardens
Dunstable, Beds, LU6 3SU