

Food First

Simple and Budget Friendly

Note: The information in this leaflet may not be suitable for certain medical conditions e.g. swallowing problems, food intolerances or allergies. It should not replace the advice of your doctor or healthcare team.

This leaflet is to help you improve your eating. Good nutrition can keep you healthy. You are more likely to catch infections if you don't eat well.

You may have a medical condition that means you don't have much of an appetite or struggle to gain weight.

Mental health issues, addiction or low income may make it difficult for you to prioritise eating.

It can be hard to know where to start if you don't have access to a kitchen or don't know how to cook.

General tips

- Try to eat something as early in the day as you can – this can help you feel hungry later too.
- Alcohol and some drugs can make you feel sick – try to have something plain like bread, toast, biscuits, cereal or crisps to settle your stomach first thing.
- Try to eat something every 3 hours.
- Don't fill up on tea, coffee, fizzy juice or energy drinks.
- Try to have milky drinks like milkshakes, hot chocolate, latte or plain milk.
- Avoid any foods labelled as low fat, diet or low calorie.
- Looking after your teeth and brushing your them regularly can help make food taste better.

What should I eat?

These foods are cheap and easy to prepare and store.

Try to have the following most days:

- Cereal with full fat (blue top milk)
- Sandwich or toast with cheese, egg, butter, peanut butter, jam, chocolate spread or tuna
- Tinned foods – beans, spaghetti hoops, beans with sausages, macaroni cheese, ravioli, soup.

Easy Meals

- Sausage roll or pie or pastry bake
- Toast with cheese, peanut butter or scrambled egg
- A roll with bacon, sausage or egg
- Pot Noodle or Super Noodles
- Microwave meals, for example cottage pie, pasta, sausage & mash or roast dinner
- Burger or chicken nuggets and chips from takeaway
- Pizza.

Snacks

You may find that eating a full meal is daunting. You should try you have regular snacks instead. For example:

- A milky coffee or milkshake
- Biscuits
- Crisps or nuts
- Chocolate bar
- Cereal bar
- Yogurt or pudding
- Cake, muffin or donut
- Sausage roll
- Tinned fruit and custard/ice cream/yogurt.

Example Day Meal Plan

Try to have 3 small meals and 2 snacks or 5-6 snacks every day.

Meal 1 (within an hour of waking up) – glass of full fat milk and cereal bar or bowl of cereal.

Meal 2 – cheese and ham sandwich and packet of crisps.

Snack 1 – milkshake and muffin.

Meal 3 – microwave spaghetti bolognaise and creamy yogurt with tinned fruit.

Snack 2 (before bed) – glass of full fat milk and chocolate bar.

Simple ways to save money when buying food

- Choose supermarket 'own brand' or 'value' ranges
- Choose tinned foods or frozen foods. These last longer too. For example tinned fruit in syrup or frozen peas instead of fresh fruit/vegetables
- Look out for supermarket offers. For example, buy 1, get one free
- Look for foods in clearance section or reduced labels
- Some supermarkets offer 'Too Good to Waste' boxes where bundles of discounted food can be ordered through apps such as 'Olio' and 'To Good to Go'
- Use free supermarket loyalty schemes to unlock discounts.

Need more help?

Please see the attached sheet with an up to date list of services in your area.

There are charities and support groups that can provide food parcels, hot meals, companionship and further guidance.

Further Information

Visit the websites or scan the QR codes below using a smartphone camera.

*To find a local food bank – **The Trussell Trust**

Telephone 01722 582 180 or search www.trusselltrust.org/get-help/find-a-foodbank/



*Help with alcohol use – **Alcoholics Anonymous**

Telephone 0800 917 7650 or search:

www.alcoholics-anonymous.org.uk



*Help with drug use – **Narcotics Anonymous**

Telephone 0300 999 1212 or search:

www.ukna.org



* Help with shopping, meal delivery and befriending for those aged over 55 – **The Food Train**

Telephone 0141 551 8118 (Edinburgh, Midlothian & East Lothian) or 01506 413 013 (West Lothian) or search:

www.thefoodtrain.co.uk



Your contact:

Telephone Number:

Date: