

Food-Based Resources: Summary

For more ideas to boost your food intake please scan the QR code or follow the link to see [Food-Based Resources](#).



If your appetite is poor, you have a low body weight or have lost weight without meaning to, you may be advised to follow a Food-Based approach. This can include:

- [Homemade Nutritious Drinks](#) such as fortified milk or milkshakes
- [High-Energy High-Protein products](#) available at supermarkets
- [Nutritious Snacks](#)
- [Food Fortification](#) (using nutrient-dense ingredients to add extra calories, protein, vitamins and minerals to your food)

This advice can help you to avoid more weight loss, gain weight, or help you to recover from an illness. You should aim to increase your calorie intake by about 500 calories (kcal) per day whilst following this advice; this can be done easily by making a few small changes.

If weight loss continues after 4 weeks of using a Food-Based approach, consider seeking advice from your GP Practice or Dietitian.

If you have diabetes, or a raised level of fat in your blood such as cholesterol please speak to your GP Practice or Dietitian before following this advice.

General Tips

- As well as following the advice in these resources, you should aim to have a varied and balanced diet which contains fruit, vegetables, starchy carbohydrates, protein sources and dairy products (or plant-based alternatives). See general advice for [Adults](#) (www.nhs.uk/live-well/eat-well) and [Older Adults](#) (www.bda.uk.com/resource/eating-drinking-ageing-well).
- Choose foods that you enjoy.
- Try eating little and often, aiming for 3 small meals and 2 to 3 snacks daily.
- Allow plenty of time to eat and do not rush mealtimes.
- Eating with other people can help stimulate appetite and encourage you to eat more. Consider arranging to meet friends or family occasionally for a meal or eating out.
- Some fresh air or gentle exercise may help to stimulate your appetite.
- You may find it easier to make small and gradual changes to your diet, instead of making lots of changes all at once.

- If you struggle with preparing or cooking meals, you can consider supermarket ready-meals or using a meal delivery service such as Wiltshire Farm Foods® or Oakhouse Foods®. Try to choose meals that contain at least 500kcal.
- Avoid foods which are labelled as diet, sugar-free, fat-free, low-fat or reduced-fat, as these generally contain less nutrition.
- It is also important to make sure you are drinking enough to avoid dehydration. Older adults can be at higher risk of becoming dehydrated; see advice for [Hydration in Older Adults](http://www.bda.uk.com/resource/hydration-in-older-adults) (www.bda.uk.com/resource/hydration-in-older-adults).

Budgeting

Most of the foods listed in these resources are commonly available and not costly. The following tips may help if you have a limited budget for food:

- Try making a list before going shopping so that you only buy foods that you need.
- Supermarket own brands are usually cheaper and as nutritious as branded foods.
- Buy foods which will have multiple uses, this will help reduce the risk of food waste. For example, cheese can be used as a snack on crackers, stirred into mashed potato, or as a main ingredient in a meal e.g. cheese toastie.
- Consider shelf life and avoid supermarket deals which involve buying larger quantities if you are unlikely to finish the food.
- Frozen and tinned foods are often cheaper, have longer shelf lives and are just as nutritious as fresh foods.
- Shop at local markets for locally-sourced foods which are usually good value for money.
- Further budgeting advice is available from the [British Dietetic Association](http://www.bda.uk.com/resource/food-facts-eat-well-spend-less) (www.bda.uk.com/resource/food-facts-eat-well-spend-less).