

INFORMATION FOR PATIENTS

Food fortification ideas for people living with diabetes

This information leaflet offers guidance for individuals with diabetes who need to gain weight while managing stable blood glucose levels. The key principle of weight gain is to consume more calories than the body expends, and this should be gradual and steady.

Calories are derived from various sources, including fats, oils, cream, protein-rich foods, starchy carbohydrates (such as bread, potatoes, pasta, rice, and cereals), and sugars. To support healthy weight gain, it may be necessary to increase the intake of both protein and energy-dense foods. Including meals and snacks that are rich in both calories and protein can help achieve this goal effectively.

In addition, maintaining good blood glucose control is essential when attempting to gain weight. Poorly controlled blood glucose levels can lead to unintentional weight loss and prevent the body from effectively using nutrients for energy, tissue repair, and muscle growth. Keeping blood glucose within target ranges helps the body utilise calories more efficiently and supports healthy weight gain.

Below are some ideas on how to enrich your foods and increase the calories:

Food	Quantity	Calories	Use
Skimmed milk powder	4 tbsp in 1 pint milk	+200 kcal	Use in tea, cereal, sauces.
Butter including nut butters or margarine	1 tsp	50 kcal	Stir into pasta, veg, spread on toast.
Double cream	2 tbsp	130 kcal	Add to soup, porridge, desserts.
Cheese (grated)	30g	120 kcal	Mix with eggs, vegetables, beans.
Mayonnaise	1 tbsp	100 kcal	Add to sandwiches, potatoes.
Evaporated milk	1 tbsp	20 kcal	Add to cereal, desserts.
Oil (e.g., olive, rapeseed, sunflower oil)	1 tbsp	120 kcal	Drizzle over vegetables, pasta, salads, or use in cooking.
Avocado	½ medium	120 kcal	Mash on toast, add to salads or smoothies.

Guacamole	2 tbsp	80 kcal	Use as a dip, spread on sandwiches or wraps.
Houmous	2 tbsp	70 kcal	Serve with bread, crackers, or vegetables.
Tahini	1 tbsp	90 kcal	Add to sauces, dressings, or spread on toast.

Tips to increase calorie content of foods:

- Add double cream to soups, sauces and puddings or use as a topping for cereals and fruit
- Add grated cheese, cream, dried milk powder, evaporated milk, dumplings, beans, pasta to soups, scrambled eggs and potatoes.
- Add grated cheese, cream, butter or margarine, milk-based sauces and/or fried onions to potatoes and vegetables.
- Use butter or margarine generously on bread and crackers, mash into potatoes, melt on boiled/jacket potatoes and stir into hot pasta or rice.
- Roast potatoes and chips are high in calories and are good to include in your diet.
- Try making cheese sauces and have with vegetables, fish or pasta.
- Use fats generously with vegetables and potatoes and use oil to fry foods.
- Include small portions of meat or fish in a sandwich or on toast.

Other tips:

- Do not use light, reduced or low-fat foods if you are trying to increase your weight.
- Choose full-fat dairy.
- Taking drinks after meals rather than before meals may help if you feel full easily.
- Hydrate with fortified drinks.
- Eat small frequent meals and snacks during the day if appetite is low.

Sample – daily meal pattern

Breakfast:

- Porridge made with fortified milk (whole milk + 2 tbsp skimmed milk powder), topped with berries and Greek yogurt OR
- Porridge made with fortified milk and add cream to it OR
- One slice wholemeal toast with butter and cheese OR
- Tea/coffee with fortified milk.

Mid-morning snack:

- Crumpet or teacake with butter and reduced sugar jam OR
- Pot of creamy yogurt or fromage frais; add 1 tbsp cream if desired.

Lunch:

- Sandwich with wholemeal/seedy bread (fillings: tuna/mayo, egg, cheese) OR
- Soup (fortified with cream or beans) OR
- Cheese and crackers OR
- A handful of nuts.

Afternoon snack:

- Digestives or Rich Tea biscuits (2–3) OR
- Fortified hot chocolate/malted milk OR
- Sugar-free jelly with cream, mousse OR
- Rice pudding.

Dinner:

- 75–100g meat/fish/poultry or vegetarian protein OR
- Mashed potatoes with butter/cream, vegetables with cheese sauce OR
- Reduced sugar custard OR
- Sponge with cream.

Supper/bedtime snack:

- Peanut butter toast/cheese/egg on toast OR
- Milk pudding OR
- Fortified cereal with milk.

Contact details

Nutrition and Dietetics Department
Clinic 5, King's Treatment Centre, King's Mill Hospital
Mansfield Road, Sutton- in Ashfield,
Nottinghamshire, NG17 4JL

Further sources of information

NHS Choices: www.nhs.uk/conditions

Our website: www.sfh-tr.nhs.uk

Patient Experience Team (PET)

PET is available to help with any of your compliments, concerns or complaints, and will ensure a prompt and efficient service.

King's Mill Hospital: 01623 672222

Newark Hospital: 01636 685692

Email: sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net

If you would like this information in an alternative format, for example large print or easy read, or if you need help with communicating with us, for example because you use British Sign Language, please let us know. You can call the Patient Experience Team on 01623 672222 or email sfh-tr.PET@nhs.net.

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