

Food First; adding extra nourishment to food and drinks in care home settings

Information for care home staff and catering teams



It is best to meet nutritional needs through everyday food and drinks. This is called the food first approach. Enriching foods by adding small quantities of everyday items is called 'food fortification'.

The Food First Approach is for anyone who:

- Has a poor appetite
- Is underweight or losing weight
- Is at risk of malnutrition (MUST score 1 or more)

Nutritional Action Plan

1 Pint of fortified milk

2 Extra Snacks



3 Fortified meals
Each meal needs fortified

4 Weekly Review of Progress
Involving the person, care and catering staff

1. Pint of fortified milk

- Add 4 tbsp of skimmed milk powder to 1 pint of full cream milk
- Use as a drink or in coffee / hot chocolate or a milkshake



Nourishing Milkshake

- 200mls of fortified milk
 - 1 heaped tbsp milkshake powder
 - 1 pot of full fat yoghurt
- Total (est): 350 kcals, 18g protein

2. Ideas for snacks (150 calories or more):

Savoury:

- Cheese and crackers
- Sausage rolls
- Fortified cereals
- Cheese on toast
- Peanut butter on toast



Sweet options:

- Cakes with jam or cream
- Scones with jam and cream
- Fortified mousse
- Cereal or breakfast bars

3. Fortify every meal

Porridge, Soup and Milk Puddings

Add 30mls (2 tbsp) of double cream and 1 tbsp of milk powder / portion

Bread, Potatoes and Vegetables

Add 10g of butter / portion



Further advice and support contact:

Community Nutrition & Dietetic Service contacts

BHSCT: (028) 9504 2317
NHSCT: (028) 7034 7861
SEHSCT: (028) 9041 1792
SHSCT: (028) 3756 2060

WHSCT: L'Derry (028) 7135 5014
Omagh (028) 8283 5553
Fermanagh (028) 6638 2007

If a person has swallowing difficulties they may have been recommended a specific food and / or fluid level called an IDDSI level. Please note that suggested foods / drinks may not be suitable for people with swallowing difficulties taking a modified diet. Always check the persons recommended IDDSI food texture or IDDSI fluid level before providing food or drinks.