

Food First Guidance

The healthcare team has completed a nutritional assessment to help guide your care. This assessment is based on your current weight, any recent weight loss and any increased nutritional requirements you have e.g. due to illness or infection.

Because of this you will be encouraged to eat more calories at each meal and in your snacks and drinks. Small changes to your every day food can make a huge difference and will help you stay nutritionally healthy.

It is common to experience a poor appetite and/or lower dietary intake during illness or following surgery, the following hints and tips will help you with your food choices whilst in hospital.

- **Tell the care staff what food you like and dislike** so they can help you choose food you enjoy
- **Choose nutritious snacks** that are available between meals
- **Try to have little and often** if you have a poor appetite. This means having 3 meals per day and 3 snacks
- **Include a dessert** with both your lunch and evening meal. Choose a milk based dessert such as ice cream, custard, yogurt or rice pudding.
- **Drink adequate amounts.** Try to drink at 6-8 cups of fluid per day as a guide, unless your clinical condition limits fluids
- **Choose nourishing drinks** such as milk, milky coffee or fruit juice
- **Choose higher energy choices** healthcare staff will help you identify these on the menu and may be able to fortify your foods

Family and friends may like to bring you extra snacks. Nourishing snacks which do not need to be stored in the fridge, such as flapjacks, chocolate, cakes (without fresh cream), crisps, dried fruit and nuts are ideal choices.

Remember friends and family are welcome in the ward to help you eat your meals and snacks.

You can find more information about 'Food First' at

<https://www.bapen.org.uk/nutrition-support/nutrition-by-mouth/food-first-project-leaflets>