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Nutrition advice for patients discharged home recovering from coronavirus (COVID-19)

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We all need to eat a balanced diet to help support a healthy lifestyle. Following a surgical procedure or recent illness, it's important to make sure that you are having a balanced diet to help support your recovery.

If you are finding that your appetite has been affected, and you are not eating enough, it is important to incorporate extra protein and calories within your diet to aid recovery and support weight. If you have a high BMI (this can be checked using the online NHS BMI Calculator) these recommendations should also be followed until you have fully recovered from your surgery or illness.

Why might I need additional energy?

Your body will require extra calories to support the repair process and provide more energy. If you are not eating enough, your body will use your energy stores which could result in weight loss and may cause a longer healing process.










Why might I need extra protein?

Protein is important to help build and repair muscle and skin. By eating extra protein it will help your body heal and feel stronger.










You should be aiming to have 2-3 portions of high protein foods per day. If you have kidney or liver disease you should check your recommended daily protein intake with a GP or your liver / renal dietitian.

When you have a wound that is healing, think of food as medicine. Eat a balanced diet with enough calories and plenty of protein.

Food high in energy

Butter, margarine, oil and cream			
Sugar, honey, syrup and glucose			
Starchy foods such as bread, cereals and potatoes			

Food high in protein

Meat, fish and chicken			
Full-fat milk, evaporated milk and milk powder			
Cheese, eggs and nuts			

Full-fat yogurts (e.g. Arla Skyr, Yoplait, Dannon)			
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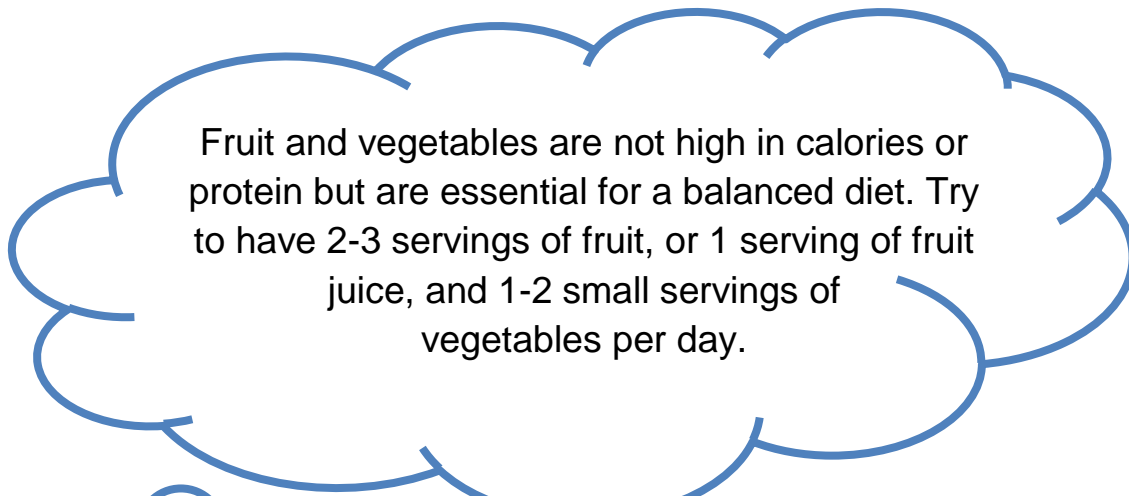
What is a protein portion?

Animal protein	Portion size in grams (g)	What does this look like?
Cooked meat (e.g. beef, pork, lamb, mince or chicken)	60g-90g	A deck of cards
Cooked white fish (e.g. cod or plaice) or canned fish	140g	Palm of hand
Cooked oil fish (e.g. salmon, mackerel or sardines)	140g	Palm of hand
2 eggs	120g	

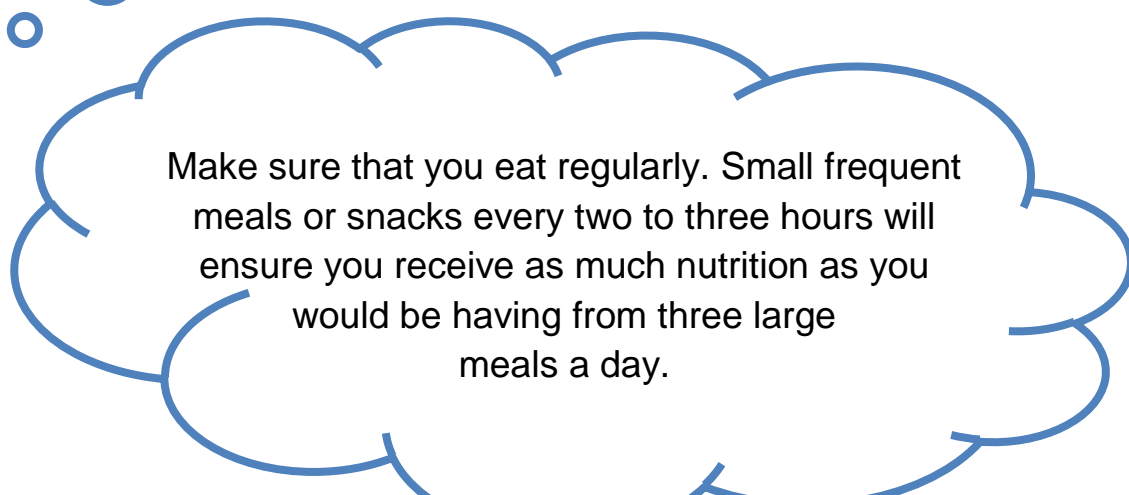
Food fact sheet: Portion sizes – British Dietetic Association (BDA)

Plant protein	Portion size in grams (g)
4 tablespoons of baked beans	150g
4 tablespoons of beans (e.g. kidney beans, butterbeans or black eyed beans)	150g
4 tablespoons of pulses (e.g. lentils or chickpeas)	150g
4 tablespoons of soya, tofu or vegetable-based meat alternative	100g
1 tablespoon/handful of nuts or peanut butter	30g

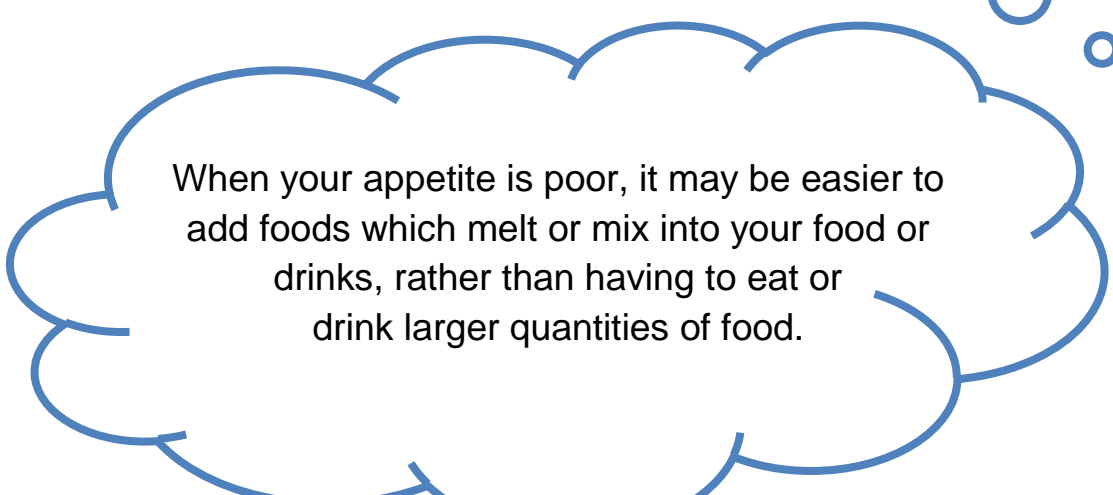
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Fruit and vegetables are not high in calories or protein but are essential for a balanced diet. Try to have 2-3 servings of fruit, or 1 serving of fruit juice, and 1-2 small servings of vegetables per day.



Make sure that you eat regularly. Small frequent meals or snacks every two to three hours will ensure you receive as much nutrition as you would be having from three large meals a day.



When your appetite is poor, it may be easier to add foods which melt or mix into your food or drinks, rather than having to eat or drink larger quantities of food.

Add extra energy to your meals

Sugar and glucose

- Add sugar to breakfast cereals, hot and cold drinks and puddings.
- Glucose can be used instead of, or as well as, sugar as it does not taste sweet.
- Spread jam, marmalade, honey or syrup thickly onto bread, toast or scones.
- Add jam, honey or treacle to milk-based puddings.
- Eat sweet foods such as biscuits, cakes and sweets.
- Drink canned drinks and fruit squashes.
- Avoid low-calorie drinks or foods.

Fatty foods

- Spread butter, or margarine, thickly onto toast or bread and add to vegetables and potatoes.
- Do not use low-fat spread.
- Fry foods when possible.
- Add oil to pasta, rice and vegetables.
- Use mayonnaise or salad cream in sandwiches and salads.
- Add cream to soups, sauces, milk puddings, fruit and porridge.
- Sour cream can be added to casseroles and baked potatoes.

High protein foods to add to your meals

Milk

- Try to use at least 1 pint of full-fat milk daily.
- Make up condensed and packet soups, porridge and jellies with full-fat milk.
- Choose milk-based puddings and milkshakes.
- Add plenty of full-fat milk to breakfast cereals.
- You can add extra protein to your milk by putting 4 tablespoons of milk powder in it. Use this milk for all your drinks, in cooking and to make puddings and instant desserts.

Cheese

- Choose full-fat hard cheeses rather than low-fat or cottage cheeses.
- Keep grated cheese in the fridge to add to soups, sauces, mashed potato, omelettes, scrambled egg, tinned spaghetti, baked beans and vegetables.

A meal plan suggestion

Breakfast

- Fruit juice – add sugar or glucose.

Midday meal

- Meat, fish, cheese or eggs.
- Mashed potatoes – add butter and fortified milk.
- Vegetables – add butter.
- Gravy or white sauce – add cream or cheese to sauce.
- Dessert – make milk puddings and instant desserts with fortified milk.
- Add jam and cream to milk puddings.

Mid-afternoon

- Tea or coffee – use fortified milk and sugar or glucose.
- Cake or scone with butter or hot buttered toast.

Between meals – snack ideas

- Cubes of cheese
- Nuts
- Teacake/scone with spread
- Crisps
- Peanut butter sandwich
- Fruit cake
- Rice pudding
- Ice cream
- Individual trifle/cheesecake/mousse
- Dried fruit

Evening meal

- Soup – make up with fortified milk, add cream or cheese.
- Meat, cheese, fish, eggs, pulses or nuts.
- Vegetables with butter or salad with mayonnaise.
- Potatoes, bread, pasta or rice. Add butter, oil, sauce, cream or cheese.
- Desserts, as midday meal.
- Sugared squash, cordial or fizzy drinks.

Bedtime

- Milky drink – homemade shakes.
- Chocolate or Horlicks.
- Cheese and biscuits or sandwich.

Ideas of high proteins snacks

Yogurts



Arla Skyr Strawberry Layer Yogurt

14.3g of protein (per 150g pot)



Arla Skyr Natural Yogurt

15.9g of protein (per serving of 150g)



Arla Protein Blueberry Yogurt Lactose Free

20g of protein (per 200g pot)



ASDA Greek Yogurt

11g of protein (per pot)



Lindahls Kvarg Raspberry

17g of protein (per 150g pot)

Cereal bars



Nature Valley Protein Peanut and Chocolate Cereal Bars

10.2g of protein (per 40g bar)



Alpen Protein Bars Chocolate

6.5g of protein (per 34g bar)



KIND Peanut Butter Protein Bar

12g of protein (per serving)

Other high protein snacks



Alesto Peanut Butter Protein Balls

9.5g of protein (per 45g bag)



The Happy Snack Company Crunchy Roasted Chickpeas Lightly Salted Flavour

5.6g of protein (per serving)

Ideas of high protein snacks to make at home

Peanut Butter Oat Energy Balls

1 ball = 4.5g of protein, 140 kcal

Ingredients for 6 servings

- ½ cup rolled oats (40g)
- ⅓ cup peanut butter (80g)
- 1 tablespoon honey
- 1 tablespoon dark chocolate chips, optional
- salt, to taste



Preparation

1. Combine all ingredients in a small bowl and mix until thoroughly combined.
2. Chill in the refrigerator for 30 minutes.
3. Use a spoon or tablespoon to evenly divide the mixture into 6 balls. Use your hands to form the ball.
4. Enjoy one now and save the rest for later by storing them in a sealed container in the refrigerator for up to one week.

Apple Snack Dippers

Per serving = 7g of protein, 143 kcal

Ingredients for 1 serving

- ⅓ medium red apple, sliced
- ¼ cup Greek yogurt (70g)
- 1 tablespoon chopped nuts
- 1 teaspoon honey
- cinnamon, to taste



Preparation

1. Combine the Greek yogurt, nuts, honey and cinnamon in a small bowl and mix to combine.
2. Serve with apple slices.

Tomato, Avocado and Egg Salad

Per serving = 7g of protein, 147 kcal

Ingredients for 1 serving

- 1 hard-boiled egg, diced
- ¼ cup avocado (35g), cubed
- ¼ cup roma tomato (50g), diced
- salt and pepper, to taste

Preparation

- Combine all ingredients in a small bowl.
- Mix until combined. Serve.



Black Bean and Quinoa Snack Bowl

Per serving = 7g of protein, 145 kcal

Ingredients for 1 serving

- ¼ cup quinoa (40g), cooked
- ¼ cup black beans (40g)
- ¼ cup red onion (35g), diced
- 2 tablespoons corn
- 1 tablespoon fresh cilantro
- 1 teaspoon lime juice
- salt and pepper, to taste

Preparation

- Combine all ingredients in a small bowl.
- Mix until combined. Serve.



Ideas of homemade, high calorie and protein milkshakes

Strawberry Delight

Per serving = 18g of protein, 454 kcal

- 1 cup whole milk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup dry milk powder
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup ice cream
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup strawberries (sliced)

Add ice cream, fruit and milk powder to the milk and beat well. Other fruit can be used instead of strawberries.



Banana Yogurt Shake

Per serving = 9g of protein, 255 kcal

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup whole milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup plain full-fat yogurt
- 1 medium ripe banana

Pour milk into a blender. Add yogurt and banana and blend until smooth. Other fruit can be used instead of bananas.



Fruit Sensation

Per serving = 10g of protein, 391 kcal

- 200ml full-fat milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ avocado
- 1 medium ripe banana
- Golden syrup or honey, to taste



Banana, Peanut Butter and Chocolate Shake

Per serving = 19g of protein, 587 kcal

- 1 medium ripe banana
- 2 pitted dates
- 240ml full-fat milk
- 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- 1 tablespoon cocoa powder



If you are allergic to milk or are vegan, milk alternatives can be used.



Royal Papworth Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

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Published: 08 April 2020

Version: 2

Review: April 2021