



The Importance of Eating Well To Maintain Weight



Often as we age, we eat less because we are not as hungry. It is important to eat a good quality diet, with foods high in protein, calcium and vitamins. Many people find they lose weight as they get older, and this is not always good for health. This sheet has some practical tips on how to eat well to maintain your weight.

Calories

A calorie is the measure of energy that we get from food, which is used to keep us alive. Too many calories can lead to weight gain and too few calories can lead to weight loss. As we get older, it can be hard to eat enough food to get enough calories to keep a healthy weight.

A high calorie diet will help when you are:

- underweight
- losing weight without trying
- unable to eat as well as you normally do (e.g. due to illness, poor teeth)

High calorie foods include:

- vegetable oils
- margarine
- butter
- full cream cow's/goat's/sheep's milk
- soy milk
- cheese cream
- milk-based desserts
- cakes
- biscuits
- pastries
- chocolate
- savoury crackers
- dips
- nuts
- soft drinks
- cordials

Hint: Use powdered milk to make your milk higher in calories.

Powdered milk is a cheap and easy way to boost the healthy value of the milk by adding extra calories, protein and calcium.

To do this, mix 1-2 tablespoons of powdered milk in a cup of full cream milk, or add 6 tablespoons of powdered milk in a bottle or carton of milk

Protein

Protein from foods is used to grow and repair all body cells. We need to eat protein every day to stay healthy. High protein foods include:

- red meat,
- fish
- chicken
- sausages
- minced meat
- eggs
- cow's/goat's/sheep's milk
- soy milk
- cheese
- tofu
- yoghurt
- legumes (chick peas, lentils, cannellini)
- tahini
- nuts

Eating well and making sure that you are getting all the nutrients you need is important to feeling well and keeping well.

Ways to eat more to stop you losing weight:

eat three meals every day with a snack in between

make sure to eat snacks if you only eat two meals a day

drink an extra drink of milk or juice every day

add extra oil or margarine to your cooking

add cream, full fat yoghurt, or powdered milk to your cereal, desserts, soups

add sour cream, cheese, powdered milk to your cooking

keep frozen meals or canned meals in your house to use when you don't feel like cooking