

Eating Well with Memory Issues

It is important to eat well in order to prevent malnutrition but this can be difficult if someone has issues with their memory. The advice in this resource can help you to support someone with memory issues to eat well.

What is Malnutrition?

Malnutrition (or undernutrition) occurs when a person does not eat enough to meet their nutritional needs.

People with memory issues can often be more likely to become malnourished due to difficulties with poor appetite, taste changes or remembering to eat regularly.

Malnutrition can have a significant impact on health so it is important to be on the look out for any changes to eating habits.

17% of older people in Scotland could be at risk of malnutrition

Malnutrition is often a silent and hidden issue that goes undetected and untreated.

Malnutrition can be difficult to spot. Look out for...

Losing weight without meaning to

Loose clothing, jewellery or dentures

Poor appetite or eating less than usual

Becoming ill more often

Loss of strength or struggling with daily tasks

Setting the Table

People with memory issues can find it difficult to eat meals in the same way they used to.

- Avoid using a "busy" plate with a pattern on it - this can make it easier to identify the food.
- Using a plate or bowl with a lip can help make it easier to pick up food
- Using a plate that doesn't match the table/table cloth can make it easier to see the plate
- Adapted cutlery, plate warmers or no spill cups may make it easier to eat and drink
- Serve finger foods or bite sized pieces to make it easier to pick up food

Top Tip!

Serve meals on a red plate.

Research has shown that serving meals on a red plate can increase appetite.



Staying Hydrated

Memory issues can make it difficult to stay hydrated. Check out our Drinking Well with Memory Issues factsheets for tips to help make it easier to get enough to drink

For more information visit

www.thefoodtrain.co.uk/eat-well-age-well

For a poor appetite

- Small meals and snacks throughout the day can make it easier to eat more
- Offer more nutrient dense meals, snacks, and drinks - think foods with more calories, protein, vitamins and minerals
- Offer snacks and puddings between and after meals
- Leave out finger foods that can be grazed on throughout the day
- Offer nourishing drinks such as milk, smoothies and milkshakes between meals (see below for a recipe)
- Try to get some fresh air if able - even opening a window can help
- Fortify meals, snacks and drinks to increase the nutritional value (see the box below for tips)

Finger Food Ideas

Chicken pieces
Cocktail sausages
Nuts
Cheese cubes
Vegetable sticks
Dried fruits
Boiled egg slices
Crackers



Fortified Milk

Add 4 tablespoons of skimmed milk powder to a pint of full fat milk to add 173kcal and 17g of protein.

You can use the milk throughout the day as a drink or in tea, soups, puddings and sauces

Food Fortification

You can add small amounts of more nutrient dense food to meals, snacks and drinks to improve the nutritional value

- Add full fat milk or cheese to soups, pasta, potatoes, eggs, porridge, and puddings
- Skimmed milk powder can be added to full fat milk, puddings, soups, sauces or foods like mashed potatoes or scrambled eggs
- Dried fruit and nuts can be added to cereals and porridge
- Add tinned meat, fish, beans, ground nuts and lentils to soups and sauces
- Add mayonnaise, salad cream to salads and sandwiches

Simple Snack
Cheese and
biscuits

Simple Snack
Scone with butter
and jam

Simple Snack
Pot of custard or
rice pudding

Simple Snack
Handful of nuts or
raisins

What Support is Available?

Eat Well Age Well Advice Line - A dietitian managed telephone advice line that offers free advice about any dietary concerns you may have. Open Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays 9am - 4pm.
Call 0131 447 8151.

Eat Well Age Well Resources - Information on preventing malnutrition, eating with a poor appetite and food fortification
www.thefoodtrain.co.uk/eat-well-age-well/resources/other-resources/

Food Train - Offers a grocery delivery service, befriending services and much more. Visit www.thefoodtrain.co.uk for more information

Super Peanut Butter and Banana Shake

Ingredients

200mls full fat milk
1 tbsp smooth peanut butter
1 tbsp skimmed milk powder
1 banana
1 small tub (150g) yogurt (any flavour)

Method

Place all ingredients in a blender and blend until smooth



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