Helping you stay well

Achieving Healthy Weight Gain
How do we address malnutrition?

By eating plenty of foods rich in nutrients we can prevent further weight loss, and gain weight if we need to. This may sound daunting if you have lost your appetite or are unsure which foods to eat. But don’t worry, it’s quite easy when you know how, and there are three main ways to achieve this:

1. Food fortification: Adding little extras to the food you already eat
2. Snacks: Having small high energy snacks between meals
3. Nourishing drinks: Packed with important nutrients

How much extra do I need?

- If you are slightly underweight or have unintentionally lost some weight, you should aim to add an extra 500 calories each day.
- If you are very underweight or have unintentionally lost a lot of weight, you should aim to add 500-1000 extra calories each day.

Adding extra calories will help you re-gain lost weight or prevent you from losing any more.

Generally we shouldn’t have to eat or drink much more than we usually do. Instead, you can choose options with more calories, or add little extras to foods to enrich them with additional calories and protein without making your portions much bigger.
Fortifying your food

Fortifying means adding little extras to meals to provide more calories, protein, and other nutrients. You should also choose meals that are higher in energy (calories). These are marked as ‘HE’ on the HILS menu. If you are preparing a meal yourself, here are a few good ideas on how to fortify the food.

Breakfast Ideas

• **Porridge**
  - Swap semi-skimmed milk for enriched milk (see recipe on page 6)
  - Add an extra topping such as 1 tablespoon of: honey / chocolate spread / a few dates / chopped banana

• **Toast or crumpets**
  - Choose standard spread instead of low-fat
  - Add peanut butter / sardines / scrambled eggs / cheese / cream cheese / paté / lemon curd / chocolate spread

Ideas for Light meals

• **Egg omelette**
  - Add a tablespoon of skimmed-milk powder, a dash of enriched milk, and a generous knob of butter or full-fat spread, full-fat cream, and 2oz grated cheese

• **Soup**
  - Add a tablespoon of cream, a knob of butter and a few croutons
  - You could also serve with a buttered crumpet

Pudding ideas

• **Fruit:** Try adding honey / cream / creamy yoghurt to fresh fruit
• **Cakes:** Choose cakes with icing, or add cream or custard
• **Yogurts, trifles & puddings:** Always choose full-fat

Our breakfast and tea service can provide options that have more calories and protein. Please get in touch with the Nutrition & Wellbeing team if you are interested in finding out more.

Have regular snacks

- You should aim to have a snack between each meal
- These should be packed full of calories and protein to help you get well again, but small enough so they don’t fill you up

Each of the snacks below provides at least 150 calories and a few important grams of protein too:

- Chocolate chip cookie
- Rice pudding
- Chocolate muffin
- Full-fat creamy yoghurt
- Cheesy crackers
- Dried fruit & nuts

Top Tip – when choosing a snack, try to avoid anything labelled as low-fat, low-calorie, or diet and choose the full-fat versions instead

Nourishing Drinks

Try to have 1-2 nourishing drinks each day, using enriched milk - recipe on the next page!

Benefits of using enriched milk:

- 1 pint of enriched milk provides 580 calories, 38g protein, and 52g carbohydrate
- The nutrients in enriched milk help promote repair and recovery from illness, as well as help maintain weight, promote weight gain, and prevent unintentional weight loss

We also have a poster with recipes for nourishing drinks: please call your local Support Team for a copy. If you prefer, there are also ready to drink versions of these drinks, such as Complan and Build-up available in your local chemist or supermarket.
Enriched milk recipe

How do I make it?
- You need 4 tablespoons of skimmed milk powder and 1 pint (568ml) of whole milk (blue top)
- Whisk the milk powder into enough milk to make a paste, then add the rest of the milk and mix well
- You can make up enriched milk in your free HILS water jug and keep it in your fridge to use throughout the day

Did you know? Milk powder is readily available in supermarkets at a very low price, usually located near the UHT milk or baking section

How can HILS help?

Provide extra food and drink
If you have been identified as at risk of being malnourished, we can provide you with high energy snacks. You can select the snacks you would like.

Offer fun education sessions
We can provide information and advice sessions for you, your family, friends, or support network to help you get the best nutrition possible.

Provide information
We have a variety of booklets and posters available, including recipes for nourishing drinks.

Tailor your menu choices
We can provide you with higher energy meals. They are marked ‘HE’ on our menu. Higher energy means the meal contains more calories to prevent further weight loss, and help promote weight gain so you can achieve a healthy weight.

Five ways to use your enriched milk

1. Use in your hot drinks, like milky coffee or hot chocolate, throughout the day

2. Pour on your cereal or use to make porridge

3. Use to make a nourishing cold drink such as milkshake; please ask us for recipes

4. Use it to make custard or sauces, and add it to soups

5. Drink a glass of enriched milk with a snack

If you need further support, our registered dietitians can visit you and give you personalised advice.

Did you know?
Milk powder is readily available in supermarkets at a very low price, usually located near the UHT milk or baking section.
I have heard that getting thinner is a normal part of ageing – is this true?

Getting thin is NOT a normal part of ageing. Lots of factors affect our appetite, food choices, and the way we eat. It’s always important to have a healthy weight for your height no matter what age you are. If you have particular issues that you feel are affecting your eating habits, please get in touch with our Nutrition & Wellbeing team, or speak to your GP.

How do we achieve a healthy diet, whilst putting on weight?

Foods that are high in fat are also full of calories, so they are great options if you want to gain weight. However, you may feel this goes against conventional advice surrounding healthy eating. If you have heart disease or you are concerned about your cholesterol levels, choosing unsaturated fats, like olive oil and rapeseed oil, nuts or peanut butter would be a healthier option. Full-fat dairy foods are packed with calcium and protein so they are great options too. It is still important to have plenty of fruit and vegetables, but remember to fortify these by serving fruit with full-fat custard or adding unsaturated oils or spreads to vegetables. If you have further concerns, please discuss this with your GP before starting an enriched diet.

Enriching your diet if you have diabetes

Can I follow an enriched diet if I have diabetes?
If your diabetes is well controlled then you should be able to follow an enriched diet.

Should I contact my GP if I have diabetes?
We would recommend that you contact your GP or diabetes nurse for a medication review if you are prescribed insulin or sulphonylureas such as gliclazide and glipizide. Your medication dose may need adjusting and your blood sugars may need to be monitored so that you are able to meet your nutritional needs safely. If your blood sugar levels are unstable or if you have any concerns we recommend that you contact your GP before starting an enriched diet.

When to contact your GP

You should contact your GP if:
- You have been eating and drinking well but seem to be losing weight
- Changes to your weight have been quite sudden with no apparent cause
- If you have questions about medication and whether you need to be cautious with any particular foods
- You are concerned about your health and changes you have noticed
- If you have any other health concerns, you are on a restricted diet, or on a fluid restriction for any reason, please speak directly with your GP prior to starting food fortification or changing fluid intake.

Tops tips for an enriching diet with diabetes
- Space out nourishing drinks throughout the day and choose smaller volumes (such as 4 drinks of 100ml instead of 2 drinks of 200ml) so that the extra carbohydrate does not have such a significant effect on your blood sugar levels.
- Enrich your meals with fat and protein-rich products (such as fortified milk, cheese, cream, peanut butter) rather than products that are high in sugar, although you do not have to exclude sugar altogether.
- You may also wish to choose heart healthy unsaturated fats such as olive or rapeseed oil when enriching foods.
HILS swaps for weight gain

### Breakfast...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instead of...</th>
<th>choose this...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Porridge made with milk (200ml)</td>
<td>Porridge made with raisins, honey and enriched milk (200ml)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Extra</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>227 calories</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>6g protein</strong></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

### Lunch...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instead of...</th>
<th>choose this...</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beef with roast potatoes</td>
<td>Steak and kidney pie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Extra</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>210 calories</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4g protein</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Chicken breast with roast potatoes</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Extra</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>96 calories</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>7g protein</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vegetarian cottage pie</td>
<td>Cauliflower and broccoli bake</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Extra</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>98 calories</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2g protein</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Stewed apple and custard</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Extra</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>118 calories</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2g protein</strong></td>
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</tbody>
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*Available products and manufacturer recipes are subject to change.*

By making small changes throughout the day, you could eat an extra 1000 calories, and nearly 30g of protein!

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HILS HANDY HINTS

**If you get full easily, or have lost your appetite:**

- Eat little and often
- Get some fresh air and try to move around as much as you can, as this can improve your appetite
- Eat with others once a week if you can to increase appetite; if you would like to find out more about lunch clubs in your area, just ask your local HILS’ Support Team
- It’s important to drink regularly throughout the day, but don’t drink too much at the same time as eating, as this can fill you up and affect your appetite
- Give yourself time to eat and avoid distractions
- Don’t forget your oral health: brush your teeth at least twice daily and use a fluoride toothpaste

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**Tea time...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Instead of...</th>
<th>choose this...</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cheese sandwich</td>
<td>Cheese and onion sandwich (with mayo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Extra</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>254 calories</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>2g protein</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Ham sandwich</td>
<td>Ham and cheese sandwich</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Extra</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>136 calories</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>10g protein</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>No added sugar jelly pot</td>
<td><strong>Extra</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>121 calories</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>4g protein</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low sugar juice drink</td>
<td>Flavoured milk drink</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Extra</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>110 calories</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>6g protein</strong></td>
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*Available products and manufacturer recipes are subject to change.*
Write down your person goals to help you prevent unwanted weight loss or gain some weight. Even small goals can make a huge difference. Make sure they are realistic and achievable for you.

For example
1. I will use enriched milk in all my drinks and on my breakfast cereal
2. I will choose the Higher Energy (HE) meals from the HILS menu
3. I will have a rice pudding or a muffin with my tea in the afternoon

Your personal goals

1. ...........................................................................................................................................................
2. ...........................................................................................................................................................
3. ...........................................................................................................................................................

We also have a selection of additional booklets and leaflets for the following health conditions:
Diabetes, feeling forgetful, caring for someone with dementia, healthy heart, good bowel health, coeliac disease, kidney problems, chewing and eating difficulties, IBS, COPD, food labelling

This resource has been compiled using available current evidence and has been approved by a team of dietitians and nutritionists. The information is for general use and should not replace individual tailored advice given by a healthcare professional.

For further information, please contact your local Support Team or visit our website on www.hertsindependentliving.org or contact us directly through nutrition@hertsindependentliving.org
Alternatively, please call Hertfordshire Independent Living Service on 0330 2000 103 (all calls charged at local rate)

Photographs of meals are for reference purposes only and may differ slightly due to recipe changes.

Hertfordshire Independent Living Service is the operating name of Hertfordshire Community Meals Limited, a community benefit society, society number IP30206R and registered as a charity with HMRC registration number XT37228

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