

Please note that this information is aimed at the general population and may not be relevant to everyone. If you are concerned that you or someone you care for may be at risk of malnutrition, contact the GP. They may refer you to a Dietitian for specialised advice. You can also find some useful information on the Forth Valley Nutrition website:

<https://nhsforthvalley.com/health-services/health-promotion/nutrition/>



Comments, Compliments & Complaints

For any comments regarding this resource, please feel free to contact our Patient Relations Service via:

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Adapted from the NHS Forth Valley Resource: "The Role Of Good Nutrition In Managing Falls and Fractures In Care Homes"

Nutrition & Safer Mobility



Eating a balanced diet

It is important to eat a balanced diet to ensure your body gets everything it needs to reduce the risk of falls and fractures.

A balanced diet includes:

Protein

This helps with muscle growth and repair and includes meat (chicken, beef, pork, lamb, turkey etc.) as well as meat free alternatives like soya/tofu and eggs, beans and pulses and nuts.



Carbohydrates and Fibre

Wholegrain carbohydrates provide us with energy and fibre promotes healthy bowel movements. Examples include bread, chapatti, pitta, potatoes, rice, pasta and cereals. We also get fibre from fruit and vegetables.



Fruit and vegetables

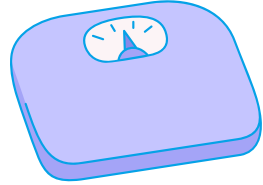
These provide a range of vitamins and minerals to support our body and immune system. This includes not only fresh fruit and vegetables, but also tinned or frozen fruit and vegetables which are just as good. A 150ml glass of fresh fruit juice per day provides your daily dose of vitamin C.



Signs and symptoms of poor nutrition

Your body can become malnourished if your diet does not contain the right amount or balance of nutrients it needs to function properly.

If adults lose 5-10% or more of their body weight within three to six months and they're not trying to lose weight, it could be a sign that they are at risk of malnourishment. However, sometimes, weight loss isn't obvious because it occurs slowly, over time and you may notice clothes, belts and jewellery gradually feel looser.



Signs and symptoms include:-

- Muscle weakness
- Feeling tired all the time or lacking energy
- Increased infections or taking a long time to recover
- Dizziness and/or more falls
- Constipation or diarrhoea
- Losing weight
- Depression
- Dehydration
- Difficulty keeping warm
- Poor/delayed wound healing
- Changes in behaviour



Hydration



Staying hydrated can help minimise constipation, urine infections, headaches, confusion and falls. It can also help increase concentration and energy levels.

You should aim to drink around 1.6-2 litres of fluids per day – around 8-10 glasses depending on the size. This could include tea and coffee, fruit juice / smoothies, diluting juice, milk /milkshakes, ice cream and water. You also get fluid from foods like custard and ice cream.

During hot weather or periods of illness with high temperature you may have to increase the amount of fluids you drink to keep hydrated.



Top Tip:

Nourishing drinks are a good way to keep hydrated and introduce more calories to help address unplanned weight loss. Here is how to make fortified milk that can be used in porridge, cereal, tea, coffee and milkshakes:

1 pint of milk + 4 tablespoons skimmed milk powder



Mix the powder with a small amount of milk to make a paste then add the remaining milk

Vitamin D

This is especially important for bone health. It is recommended that adults take a 10 microgram Vitamin D supplement during the winter months when you are not getting as much natural Vitamin D from the sun. You can also get some Vitamin D from foods such as oily fish, liver, egg yolks, red meat and foods with added Vitamin D such as some breakfast cereals and spreads.



Dairy and dairy alternatives

These contain calcium which is also very important for bone health. Examples include milk/milkshakes, yogurts, cheese and milky desserts. Ensure any dairy alternatives (such as soya milk) are fortified with calcium and try to include these 2-3 times per day. Your GP may also start you on a calcium supplement, if required, to help boost intake.



If you are concerned about not getting enough vitamin D or calcium then speak with your GP for individual advice to suit you.



Eatwell Guide

The 'Eatwell' guide is used widely across the UK to show how much of each food group you should eat to have a healthy balanced diet. It is divided into different sections to symbolise each food group and the average portion on our plate. You don't have to follow for every single meal as the most important thing is to get the balance right by eating more from the larger four food groups and less food from the smaller ones.

See the Eatwell Guide for more information.

If you have had experienced unplanned weight loss, you may want to choose higher fat options rather to minimise further weight loss.

