

A Food First Approach:

Making the most of what you eat – for Plant based diets

*Are you struggling with a poor appetite? Have you lost weight recently?
If you have answered yes to either of these, then this leaflet could help you.*

If you have been seen by the speech and language therapist and diagnosed with DYSPHAGIA (problems with swallowing) please do not use this leaflet.

Eat Little and Often

Try to have 3 meals each day plus 3 snacks and nourishing drinks between meals. If you cannot eat a full meal, eat a small amount every 2-3 hours, e.g. have 5 - 6 small meals per day.

Eat what you fancy and if your appetite is better at certain times of the day, aim to eat more at these times. Cold foods can sometimes be more appetizing than hot foods.

Use convenience foods. Ready meals & puddings can be easier to prepare and are just as nutritious.

If you find softer options easier add extra sauces or gravy to your meals. Blend silken tofu or soaked cashew nuts with nutritional yeast to make a protein rich sauce.

Choose foods and drinks that are 'nourishing' i.e. high in calories and protein such as soya milks, soya yoghurts and nut butter products. Avoid foods labelled 'diet', 'reduced/low fat', 'healthy eating' or 'sugar free'.

Drinking during meals may make you feel full so try and wait until after you have finished eating to have a drink.

Nutritious Drink Recipes

Take Nourishing Drinks between Meals

Aim to drink 6 to 8 cups of fluid each day. Whilst fluids such as water and squash are hydrating, they are not high in calories and may make you full. Include at least two nourishing drinks each day.

Nourishing drinks (make with milk alternatives) give you extra calories and protein too.

Make drinks with a full cup of fortified milk (soya is the best) e.g., vegan hot chocolate e.g., Cadbury original, Whittards, vegan milkshakes, coffee, or tea.

Add extra vegan cream, vegan chocolate flakes, nut butters or sweet treats for even more calories! Try shop-bought smoothies or vegan shakes, usually located in the refrigerator aisle.

Plant-based milkshake recipe

250ml soya milk
3 level tablespoons (18g) protein powder
4 teaspoons (16g) cocoa powder and/or nut butter
4 teaspoons vanilla vegan ice cream

Method: Mix all ingredients together, blend until smooth. Serve chilled. Top with nut butter/vegan chocolate or anything you like!



Salted Caramel shake (makes 2)

3 dates, 1 banana, 1 tin coconut milk (400ml), 2 dessertspoons (40g) peanut butter, pinch of salt

Method: Blend all the ingredients together and enjoy!

For a nutritious breakfast drink – add soaked oats or Weetabix and banana to the above and blend.

Think, Food First!

Enrich your Food and Drink

Adding small amounts of high calorie foods to your normal food and drink will help boost the nutritional content without increasing the portion size. This is known as **food fortification**.

Food fortification ideas:

- **Add plant-based milk/yoghurts** to porridge, sauces, soups, puddings, fruit (fresh, tinned or stewed), hot milky drinks, smoothies and milkshakes
- **Add vegan spreads and/or cheese** to potato (boiled, mashed or jacket), pasta, crackers, crumpets, sandwiches, toast, soups, sauces and vegetables
- **Add olive, vegetable or sunflower oil** to pasta and salad dressings and any other meals
- **Add vegan mayonnaise** to potato (boiled, mashed or jacket) or sandwiches
- **Add protein powder e.g., pea, soya or flaxseed protein powder** to porridge/milkshakes and smoothies
- **Add powdered nut butters**, nut butter, ground nuts or seeds to smoothies or desserts

Other foods you can add include: Avocado, beans/pulses, oils, spreads, coconut cream, dried fruit, stewed fruit, sauces, peanut/almond or other nut butters, vegan ice cream, Quorn and hummus

Savoury Snack Ideas

- Nuts, peanut butter or other nut butters (*if not allergic*).
- Carton silken tofu
- Potato cake with vegetable spread and meat substitute
- Avocado, houmous or dips with bread, toast, pitta bread, lentil crisps
- Vegan quiche
- Vegan sausage roll or samosas
- Quorn sausages/meats
- Vegan cheese and biscuits
- Trail mix
- Olives or tapenade

Sweet Snack Ideas

- Date and nut balls
- Muesli or cereal style bars
- Dried fruit – plain, coated or with nut butter
- Oat cookies or flapjacks
- Vegan chocolate
- Plant based yoghurts/milks
- Soya custard deserts/puddings
- Jelly – can add plant based milk
- Malt loaf or banana bread bars
- Bowl of cereal with soya milk
- Dairy free ice cream and frozen fruit
- Frozen banana ice cream

TOP TIPS

Plant based milks and yoghurts

- Choose products that are fortified with micronutrients, Vitamin D, Iodine, Iron. This will be shown on the back of the carton.
- Eat a wide variety of protein sources (beans, legumes, tofu, and meat replacements). Try to include a protein source with all your meals.
- Include a source of vitamin C around the timings of eating your iron rich foods to aid absorption (iron rich foods are beans, pulses, fortified products and green leafy veg)

Try to have 3 meals, 3 snacks, nourishing drinks between meals and enrich your food.

Leaflet given out by _____

Contact number: _____

Think, Food First!