

# Poor Appetite

Sometimes there are days when you just do not feel like eating. You may be recovering from an illness, have just left hospital or just lost your appetite. Everybody knows to be healthy you have to eat and drink regularly.

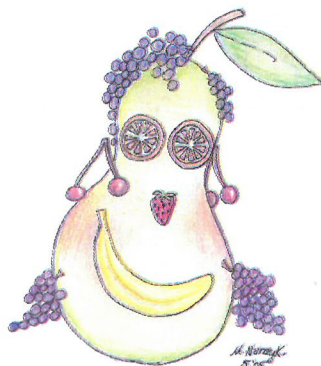
Following are a few ideas how to get over your poor appetite.

## *Why should you eat or drink regularly?*

Foods and liquids give you the strength to do things.

Long periods without food can make you nauseated.

The body needs food for defence against infection and to help you heal.



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## Hints on Improving your Appetite

- ▶ Try having small, frequent snacks, rather than three meals
- ▶ If you have no appetite, you probably do not feel hungry. Decide you will have something to eat or drink at certain times each day. Try 8am, 10am, 12 noon, 3pm, 6pm and 9pm.
- ▶ Make each snack as tasty, enjoyable and convenient as possible. Eating with family or friends may help.
- ▶ Snacks should be full of calories and protein to help maintain your weight and stimulate your appetite. (See ideas later on).
- ▶ Drink fluids if cannot face eating. (See ideas later on).
- ▶ Avoid drinking low calorie fluids like, tea, coffee, water, unless they are full of sugar and cream.
- ▶ Choose foods which do not have a strong smell.
- ▶ Try not to mix hot and cold foods as it may make you vomit.
- ▶ If you can, ask somebody to prepare your food for you.
- ▶ If your doctor allows it, try having a small glass of alcohol half an hour before you snack. It may stimulate your appetite.

### *I feel full all the time...*

- ▶ Small, frequent snacks may help.
- ▶ Avoid drinking fluids before your meal.
- ▶ Try not to eat quickly or drink fluids rapidly.

### *I feel sick all the time...*

- ▶ Eating frequently may help your nausea.
- ▶ Try sipping fluids like flat lemonade, gingerale, milk, if you do not feel like eating.
- ▶ Salty crackers and biscuits can help.
- ▶ If you feel sick in the morning, try eating a cracker or dry toast before you get up.



## *My mouth is too sore or too dry...*

- ▶ Drink high protein or calorie fluids until you can eat properly. (See ideas later on.)
- ▶ Try mashing your food so you do not have to chew too hard. Add milk or cream to make food smoother.
- ▶ Very hot or cold food can be painful, so try them lukewarm.
- ▶ Sucking mints can soothe your mouth and stimulate saliva if your mouth is dry.



## *Food tastes awful...*

- ▶ You may need to adjust the seasoning in your cooking. Add salt to food which is too sweet like milkshakes.
- ▶ Experiment with herbs and spices. Try lemon or mint.
- ▶ If some foods taste strange try alternatives. You could swap red meat for chicken, fish, eggs.



*The more often you eat something  
the quicker your appetite will return.  
Try to increase the number of  
mouthfuls or sips you had from the  
meal before*

## A Few Ideas for a Suggested Meal Plan for a Poor Appetite

**FIVE** small snacks a day are often better than 3 meals. Eat as much as you can and build up the amount frequently.

### *Snack 1*

Toast

Serve crustless spread with butter or margarine, honey or peanut butter or jam



*Serve dry if feeling sick.*

*and / or*

Convenience cereals in a cereal packet, add sugar and fortified milk



Porridge made with cream and fortified milk

*and / or*

Sweetened fruit with fruit, yoghurt or cream



### *Snack 2*

Milkshake

Serve chilled with a nice garnish



*and / or*

Fruit Juice

Add Polycose or icecream for added calories



*and / or*

Biscuit

Choose the most fattening you can think of



## Snack 3

Soup



Open a tin for convenience and add cream or fortified milk

*and / or*

Sandwich



Cut the crusts off and fill with well flavoured fillings. Try chicken and mayonnaise or cottage cheese and pineapple or tuna, egg and parsley or peanut butter and honey

*and / or*

Cake / Scone Add cream and jam for an extra treat



## Snack 4

Eggs



Scrambled, boiled, poached or fried they make a versatile food. Add cream, cheese, herbs and make an omelette.

*and / or*

Cheese



Melted on toast or made into macaroni cheese

*and / or*

Vegetables



Add butter and cream and mash if you find vegetables hard to chew.

## Snack 5

Milo



Add sugar, fortified milk, whipped cream and nutmeg for a soothing drink.

and / or

Ice-cream



Top with fruit puree, chocolate sauce or whipped cream

and / or

Crackers



Topped with cheese, pate or pickle

*These snacks are suggestions which can be eaten at any time of the day. For instance porridge makes a great supper when you are tired! It is warm, nutritious, filling and will help you sleep.*

When your appetite is poor, everything you eat / drink should be as high in protein and energy as possible. By doing this you will prevent weight loss and further appetite loss.

## *How can I 'Enrich' what I eat?*

- Use cream or fortified milk (see recipes following) where you would normally use milk.
- Add butter or margarine to vegetables.
- Grate cheese into soup, casseroles or scrambled eggs.
- Sugar, honey, golden syrup or jam can be added to cereals and desserts.
- Use mayonnaise to 'bind' sandwich fillings.
- Add skim milk powder to food like custards, stews, scones.

## Fluid Suggestions

Make these drinks in large volumes and keep them in the refrigerator.

### ***Fortified Milk***

600 ml (1 pint) milk – *silver top*

3 tablespoons skim milk powder



Sprinkle milk powder on milk and whisk until lumps dissolve.  
Flavour if desired, with cocoa, vanilla or mashed fruit.

*Use fortified milk where you would normally used milk in tea, coffee or cooking.*

### ***Milkshake***

300 ml fortified milk

2 tablespoons icecream

Flavouring

Whisk ingredients and serve chilled.

*Flavouring suggestions – banana, pureed fruit, chocolate, coffee.  
Add a dash of salt if too sweet.*

### ***Spider***

1 glass fizzy drink

1 tablespoon icecream

Add icecream to fizzy drink and serve whilst still fizzing.



