



Healthy Eating for Better Breathing

Poor appetite

I have a poor appetite. What can I do?

Maintaining a healthy body weight is important for good health. When appetite is poor, or you are too tired to eat, you can experience weight loss. Weight loss causes a loss of muscle mass and weakening of the muscles that are used to breathe.

- Keep foods visible and easy to get to. You have a better chance of snacking when foods are accessible.
- Eat small, frequent meals and snacks throughout the day.
- Try to eat a variety of foods at each meal.
- Include your favorite foods often.
- Eat more foods at the time of day when your appetite is the best.
- Make eating an enjoyable time. Invite a guest.
- Limit your fluid intake before and during meals. Filling up on drinks will limit your appetite.
- If you are tired:
 - Ask friends and family members to help you with cooking, shopping or ordering food for home delivery.
 - Buy ready-made meals from the grocery store or a meal delivery service to have on hand.
 - Make double recipes when you are feeling well. Freeze the extra and use when you don't feel like cooking.

If you need to **gain weight**, select high calorie and high protein foods frequently at meal and snack times. Foods that provide little nutritional value should be limited.

What foods are high in calories and protein?

If you are underweight try including these foods that have more calories and protein in them for your meal preparation:

Milk and Milk Products:

Whole milk products like cheese, yogurt, or ice cream can be used often (3%MF or more).

- Cook hot cereal with whole milk instead of water.
- Use whole milk in puddings, pancakes, soups and casseroles instead of water.
- Add skim milk powder to your drinks and/or recipes.
- Snack on cheese or include with meals.
- Add cottage cheese to meals.
- Use a generous amount of sour cream or Greek yogurt.



Nuts and seeds:

- Add peanut butter on bread or crackers.
- Add nuts and seeds to your cereals or yogurt or have them as a snack.



More ideas to increase calorie and protein:

- Add chopped or ground meat, poultry or fish to pasta, casseroles, omelets or soups.
- Use extra margarine, gravy, butter and oils.
- Add hard boiled eggs to salads, pasta, soups, and sandwiches.
- Vegetables could be prepared with added fats and cheese.
- Fruits could include a sauce, canned in syrup or try fruit nectars.
- Add sauces or gravies to meats.
- Add dry milk powder or protein powder to milk, soups, sauces, dips and casseroles.
- Add hemp or chia seeds to yogurt, cereal or put in smoothies.
- Try creamed soups and soups with added vegetables, pasta and meat.
- Include a nutritional supplement if you are not able to eat enough.
(Please see handout regarding use of nutrition supplements)

If you are struggling to eat healthy or maintain your weight, you may benefit from the advice of a Registered Dietitian. Ask your doctor or health care team member for a referral to a dietitian.