



Meals on Wheels and More

**Directions:** Nutrition education piece is appropriate if person answered “yes” on the nutrition assessment to one or more of the following:

- ❖ I have an illness or condition that made me change the kind and/or amount of food I eat
- ❖ I eat fewer than two meals/day
- ❖ I have tooth or mouth problems that make it hard for me to eat
- ❖ I eat alone most of the time
- ❖ Without wanting to, I have LOST ten pounds in the last six months

### **HOW TO IMPROVE YOUR APPETITE**

**Tips to make your mealtime more enjoyable:**

#### **Setting**

- ❖ Make a comfortable place to eat: set out a nice table setting or placemat.
- ❖ Change eating locations around your home: eat one meal in the kitchen, next try your living room, or the porch.
- ❖ Play music, relax, and enjoy your meal.

#### **Friends**

- ❖ Find neighbors or friends to eat with regularly. If possible, take turns cooking the meal or cook together a few times a week.
- ❖ Meet new friends over lunch at your local congregate meal site.
- ❖ Start a “pot-luck dinner club”.

#### **Food**

- ❖ Try new seasonings to make food more appealing and taste better. For example: powdered ginger, curry, Italian herbs, garlic & onion powder, dried thyme or rosemary.
- ❖ Try breakfast for dinner or vice versa.
- ❖ Eat your largest meal at the time of day you feel most like eating. Often people will find that breakfast time is when they are most hungry.
- ❖ Pamper yourself with foods you really like sometimes. If a pat of real butter makes you want to eat your vegetables, then use a small amount.
- ❖ Limit “empty” foods, such as soft drinks and candy. These can cause you to feel full, and they do not have the vitamins and minerals your body needs.
- ❖ If you don’t have the appetite for 3 large meals per day, then eat smaller, more frequent meals throughout the day
- ❖ Lack of sleep can interfere with appetite. Try a bedtime snack, and/or a milky drink. This may help with sleep.

### **Loss of Appetite and unwanted weight loss.....**

- ❖ Aim for protein and calories- these prevent the body from breaking down muscle and help to rebuild new tissue.
  - snack on cheese and crackers or peanut butter and crackers, boiled eggs or milk shakes.
  - add peanut butter to hot cereals
  - add canola oil or butter to vegetables, meat, beans
- ❖ Try drinking Ensure, Boost, Carnation Instant Breakfast Drink or other liquid supplement. They provide protein, vitamin and minerals and come in several flavors.

*Follow this chart when using dry milk in place of fluid milk:*

<b>If recipe calls for this much fluid milk</b>	<b>Use this much nonfat dry milk</b>	<b>Use this much water</b>
1 tablespoon	1 tablespoon	2 1/2 teaspoons
1 cup	1/3 cup	1 cup
1 quart (4 cups)	1 1/3 cups	4 cups
1/2 gallon (2 quarts)	2 2/3 cups	7 3/4 cups

- ❖ For use in mashed potatoes: add 1/4 cup dry milk for each cup of potatoes. Then use either the water potatoes were cooked in or fresh milk to get the right consistency.

### **Loss of Appetite due to chewing problems.....**

- ❖ When eating....
  - Cut food into small bites and chew slowly and thoroughly. Ask if your home delivered meal or congregate meal service has a “soft” meal option.
  - Take sips of water or other liquids while eating to keep your mouth and food moist.
- ❖ When cooking....
  - Cook and serve dry foods with broth, gravy, sauces, canola oil, or milk.
  - Mash or blend foods to make homemade shakes or add blended vegetables or ground meats to casseroles or soups
  - Cook fruits and vegetables until soft, or fork tender
- ❖ When buying....
  - Choose softer fruits and vegetables including bananas, peas, canned yams, or beans.
  - Consider soft, smooth foods such as yogurts, puddings or apple sauce.

**Please consult with a health care professional for additional questions, information, and/or concerns.**

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