

How is your appetite today? Nutrition and healthy ageing

Eating well through a varied and nutritious diet is important for good health and wellbeing throughout life, but as we age it becomes even more important.

Did you know that 1 in 10 people over 65 are at greater risk of becoming malnourished through not eating enough to stay healthy and well?

Not eating enough affects your health, increasing your risk of becoming unwell and taking you longer to recover. If your appetite has dropped, you have lost weight without meaning to or you are feeling low, you could be at risk of becoming malnourished.

What causes malnutrition?

There are lots of reasons that might cause us to become malnourished including changes in your life circumstance, depression, or anxiety, feeling lonely, a period of ill health, problems with dentures/teeth or difficulty accessing food.

What can you do?

- Eat with others or include food in social events - We eat better together.
- Keep a store cupboard of basics.
- Eat your favourites – it's all about enjoying your food.
- Bring food into your life – cook if you can, teach other your recipes, plan menus with family and friends.
- How about a snack with your morning drink?
- Know your body/appetite – when are you usually hungry and what do you like?
- You might want to keep a regular record of your weight - if it drops, speak to a health professional.
- Talk about it – Your GP, health professional, friends or family can help.
- Keep a drink near – staying hydrated can help prevent falls and kidney problems as well as keeping you feeling good.

If you have a smaller appetite there are lots of ways you can add some extra calories and still enjoy food.

- Try eating small meals, little and often is good (e.g. six times a day instead of three)
- Switch to full fat milk, yogurt, and cheese.
- Have a snack with any drink between meals.

Local community organisations can help with shopping, accessing services and providing a healthy cooked meal at a lunch club.

Find out more about malnutrition and tips for eating well at: [Malnutrition Task Force Eating well in later life booklet](#)

For more information on staying healthy as you get older visit: <http://www.wandsworth.gov.uk/public-health/your-health/healthy-ageing/>

Or speak to your GP or a health care professional.