

Getting the Balance Right: Following a Fortified Diet Longer Term

If you have been advised to have a fortified diet for weight gain, you will still need to consider how to maintain a healthy balanced diet. Eating a healthy balanced diet means choosing a variety of foods from all of the five food groups (carbohydrate, protein, fats and sugars, fruit and vegetables, and dairy) and having regular meals, including breakfast, lunch and dinner. You may also find frequent snacks are easier to manage than having big meals.

If you would like more information on the five food groups, please speak to your healthcare professional or ask for the 'Food for Better Health' leaflet; this leaflet has also been produced by Nutrition & Dietetics and contains lots of information on how to achieve a healthy balanced diet.

Even though your fortified diet may include eating foods higher in fat and sugar, by following these tips you can still continue to make healthier choices. These tips have been adapted from the 'Eat Well: 8 tips for making healthier choices' leaflet; produced by the Food Standards Agency.

- Base your meals on starchy foods.** This includes rice, potatoes, chapattis, pasta and bread. By choosing wholegrain varieties you can increase the amount of fibre in your diet. Wholegrain options include oats, seeded bread, brown rice or pasta and wholegrain cereals.
- Eat lots of fruit and vegetables: you should aim for 5 portions a day.** Fruit and vegetables may not be high in calories but by choosing dried, tinned or stewed options and serving them with cream or with a sauce, you can still maintain your weight gain and ensure you are getting enough vitamins as well.
- Include a protein containing food with your main meals twice a day.** This includes beef, lamb, chicken, turkey, pork, beans, lentils, soya mince, Quorn™ and tofu.



- Ensure you have 600ml (1 pint) of milk a day.** Try full fat fortified milk to promote weight gain further; add 2-4 heaped tablespoons of dried skimmed milk powder to 1 pint full cream milk and blend/mix until smooth. Chill in the fridge and then use on cereals, in porridge, to make up sauces, soups, desserts, jellies or milky drinks etc. If you are replacing dairy with soya, rice or oat milks, choose calcium fortified options. If you cannot manage a full pint of milk, aim for at least 2 servings of dairy food a day; good choices include yoghurt or hard cheese.
- Aim to eat 2 portions of fish including one portion of oily fish a week.** Oily fish includes salmon, fresh tuna, herring, mackerel, sardines or trout: these contain higher levels of healthy fats which are good for the heart.
- Cut down on saturated fat.** When making fortified choices try to choose vegetable fats such as vegetable or olive oils and spreads over animal fats such as butter or lard. Nuts and nut products such as peanut butter are good choices as these are high calorie but low in saturated fat.
- Be sugar aware:** clean your teeth carefully using a fluoride toothpaste to protect against tooth decay and visit your dentist regularly.
- Try to eat less than 6g of salt a day.** Salt is linked to increased blood pressure and heart disease. To decrease the amount of salt in your diet try using herbs, spices and lemon juice to add flavour.
- Don't skip meals, especially breakfast.** Skipping meals may result in missing out on essential nutrients. If you cannot manage a full meal, try having a snack or a nourishing drink.



For more information on how to follow a fortified diet, please refer to our other resources Fortified Diet Plan, Nourishing Drinks and 100 Calorie Boosters.