

Nourishing Plant Based Diet

Information for people who are intolerant to dairy or following a plant-based diet and who maybe at risk of malnutrition.

A balanced diet is essential for health and wellbeing. If you have a poor appetite, low body weight and/or unintentional weight loss, you may be at risk of malnutrition. Malnutrition may occur when you do not get the correct amount of nutrients, which your body needs. During periods of illness, disease and recovery, your body may require more nutrients than it normally does.

Malnutrition can have the following consequences:

- increased risk of illness and infection
- slower wound healing
- increased risk of falls
- low mood
- reduced energy levels
- reduced muscle strength
- reduced quality of life
- reduced independence and ability to carry out daily activities

Treating malnutrition

Including nutrient dense foods and nourishing drinks can help to increase energy intake without making portions too big to manage. Protein, energy (calories), vitamins and minerals are all important for people who are malnourished.

General tips for eating well:

- Eat 2 - 3 portions of high protein foods every day such as nuts, beans, pulses, soya, tofu, and other meat-free protein foods.
- Eat/drink 2 - 3 portions of calcium containing foods every day such as fortified soya, oat, rice or hemp milk and soya or coconut yoghurt.
- Include starchy food at each meal e.g., potatoes, pasta, rice, bread or cereals.
- Eat some fruit and vegetables every day (fresh, frozen, tinned, dried or juiced).
- Have at least 6-8 glasses/mugs of fluid every day, choosing drinks that contain some nutrition where possible. For example, drinks made with plant-based milks (malted drinks, hot chocolate, smoothies, and shakes) can provide energy, protein and vitamins and minerals. All these drinks contribute towards your daily fluid intake.

If you have any health conditions which have previously required you to limit fat and sugar in your diet, e.g., diabetes or high cholesterol, you should discuss whether you still need to limit these with a health professional.

The following tips will help you to increase the amount of energy and protein you eat each day:

- Eat little and often, e.g., 5 - 6 smaller meals/plates each day
- Try to include **at least 500ml** of fortified plant-based milks each day and where possible choose 'original', 'sweetened' and/or 'high protein' varieties. Fortified plant milk can be used in tea/coffee, cereals, sauces, puddings and for nourishing drinks. Be careful of 'organic' plant-based milks, which are not fortified with calcium.
- Avoid low fat and/or diet versions of foods.

Add food toppers to your meals



Add 1 - 2 food toppers to **each of your main meals and desserts**:

Food topper	Calories (Kcal)	Protein (g)	Ideas to fortify your meals
1 tablespoon (15ml) olive or nut oil	140	0	Mix with balsamic vinegar as a dip for bread. Add to vegetables/soup.
1 tablespoon (15g) vegetable spread	75	0	Spread thickly on bread. Add to vegetables and potatoes
30g (match box size) dairy free cheese	80	0	Add to crackers, bread, potatoes, and soups
1 heaped tablespoon (15g) ground/chopped almonds or hazelnuts	92	3.2	Add to rice puddings, yoghurts, desserts, porridge or roasted and stir-fried vegetables
1 teaspoon (5g) creamed coconut	100	0.9	
2 tablespoons (30ml) soy or oat cream	42	0.6	
1 tablespoon (15g) peanut, cashew or almond butter	91	3.4	Spread on toast or add to pasta and stir-fried vegetables. Mix with soya yoghurt to make a dressing or add to oil and lemon juice to marinade tofu and plant-based proteins
1 tablespoon dairy free pesto	58	0.4	
1 tablespoon (15g) tahini sesame seed paste	100	3.5	
1 rounded tablespoon (30g) dairy free cream cheese	70	0	Add to pasta dishes, crackers, bread, and jacket potato fillings
1 scoop (60ml) dairy free ice cream**	55	0.5	Add to desserts and fruit
1 tablespoon (15g) black strap molasses	42	0.6	Add to savoury dishes and sauces
2 heaped teaspoons (10g) of nutritional yeast flakes	34	4.7	Add to soups, casseroles, porridge, cereals, plant-based milk, and yoghurts

**Nut based ice creams contain a source of protein – check ingredients



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Include high-energy snacks between meals

Aim to include 2 - 3 high-energy snacks each day each containing at least 150 kcal calories. Examples of snacks containing at least 150kcal include:



Sweet	Savoury
Two slices of fruited malt loaf e.g., 1/4 of Soreen loaf* (add vegan margarine/spread for extra energy)	Large handful of nuts and seeds*
1 pot (120g) of coconut yoghurt	30g (matchbox size) dairy free cheese with two crackers or digestive biscuits*
1 dairy free dessert pot with extra soy or oat cream	50g (quarter of a pot) full fat dip e.g., hummus*, guacamole, mayonnaise or dairy free cheese dip. Served with pitta bread, breadsticks, crisps or crackers
2-3 bite sized plant-based flapjacks or mini cakes	2-3 falafel*, bhaji* or samosas*
1 toasted teacake with spread*	1 slice of bread/toast, crumpet or ½ bagel with 1 tablespoon of peanut butter*
½ tin (100g) fruit with 2 scoops of dairy free ice cream	1 slice of plant-based quiche*
1 bowl of porridge or cereal made with high protein plant milk* or a cereal bar*	2 small vegan rolls* or 3 plant-based mini savoury eggs*
1 large handful (approx. 50g) of dried fruit	Two handfuls (approx. 35-40g) of roasted broad bean/fava bean snacks*
30g dairy free chocolate	1 small packet of corn chips or crisps

Foods marked with a * contain a source of protein

Include nourishing drinks

Try to include two plant based nourishing drinks each day. Plant based milks which are higher in energy include soya, rice, oat, pea and hemp milk. High protein versions are also available, e.g., Alpro® plant protein original soya drink. Examples of easy to make nourishing drinks include:

- Hot chocolate made with plant milk
- Vegan Horlicks® made with plant milk
- Plant based milk smoothie with high protein yoghurt or ice cream
- Fruit smoothie made with fortified plant-based milk or yoghurt



Read our nourishing plant-based recipes leaflet for ideas if you wish to make your own nourishing drinks.

Alternatively, plant based nourishing drinks are available to buy on-line and at some supermarkets and health food shops. Plant based brands available include Huel ready-to-drink®, Y-Food Vegan Drink® and Vitally Vegan.



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Example Meal Plan

Here is an example of a food diary with food that has not been fortified compared to food that has been fortified using simple measures – making small changes have increased the total number of calories and protein at the end of the day:

Meal	Standard	Fortified
Breakfast	Porridge made with water Cup of coffee with oat milk	Porridge made with oat milk and 1 heaped tablespoon of ground almonds and 1 tablespoon of golden or maple syrup. Cup of coffee with 200ml high protein plant milk
Mid-morning	Water	Fruit smoothie and a handful roasted broad bean snacks
Lunch	Small tin of baked beans on one slice of dry toast	Small tin of baked beans on one slice of toast with dairy free spread and grated dairy free cheese
Mid-afternoon	Herbal tea	Herbal tea and 1 slice of toast with peanut butter
Evening meal	Pasta with tomato and basil sauce	Pasta with tomato and basil sauce with 2 heaped teaspoons of nutritional yeast, 1 tablespoon tahini paste and a heaped tablespoon of dairy free cream cheese
Supper	Herbal tea	Vegan malt drink made with high protein plant milk and 4 squares dairy free chocolate
Totals	584kcal and 20.5g protein	1960kcal and 68.9g protein

Ready meals and home delivery

If you are struggling to prepare or cook meals, you may wish to consider ready meals. Most supermarkets stock a range of plant-based meals. Alternatively, on-line companies, for example, Planty, Allplants, Green Chef, and COOK can deliver vegan ready meals to your door.



Further Information and Support

Visit the 'Malnutrition' section on our website www.patientwebinars.co.uk for webinars and further information, including additional plant based nourishing recipes and information on plant-based diets.

Additionally, if you have concerns about your nutritional intake and/or unintentional weight loss and feel you need further support then ask your GP to refer you to a dietitian for advice.

