

To help prevent weight loss try fortifying your meals with the following high protein, high calorie foods:

- Full fat milk/cream – make milkshakes or add to teas, coffees, soups & puddings.
- Whisk 2- 4 tablespoons of dried skimmed milk powder into a pint of milk.
- Add butter, margarine, cream or cheese to dishes e.g. potatoes.
- Add cooked meat, fish, beans & other pulses to soups and sauces.
- Add honey, chopped nuts or dried fruit to puddings, cereals or porridge.



What You Can Do?

- Monitor your weight regularly and be aware of the signs of malnutrition.
- If you struggle with a poor appetite try eating little and often, and add additional snacks and milky drinks during the day.
- Try fortifying your meals with high calorie, high protein foods e.g. butter or cream.
- If you have ongoing concerns about your weight, speak to your GP.

Eat Well Age Well is a national project from the award winning Scottish Charity, Food Train and is funded by The Scottish Government. Our aim is to focus on the prevention, detection and treatment of malnutrition and dehydration among older adults living at home in Scotland.



For more information and to sign up for our monthly e-news

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Understanding Malnutrition and What You Can Do



What is malnutrition?

Malnutrition occurs when a person's diet does not meet their nutritional needs.

Malnutrition is a significant problem for older adults. It is estimated that 1 in 10 older people living in the community are suffering from or at risk of malnutrition¹. This equates to approximately 103,000 older people in Scotland².

Those who are malnourished are twice as likely to visit their GP, more likely to require hospital admission, and have a greater number of health issues.

The causes of malnutrition are complex, risk factors include: social isolation, loneliness, food poverty, increasing frailty and oral health problems.

The problem of malnutrition, and associated health costs, are predicted to worsen with an ageing population.



What are the signs of malnutrition?

- Low weight/A body mass index (BMI) under 18.5kg/m²
- Unintentional weight loss
- Poor appetite/eating less than normal
- Loose clothing, jewellery or dentures
- Loss in muscle strength/recent fall
- Getting ill often and taking a long time to recover



Consequences of malnutrition

Increased:

- risk of infections (e.g. chest infections)
- risk of pressure ulcers
- risk of falls
- hospital admissions
- length of recovery & hospital stay
- muscle wasting & weakness
- confusion

Reduced:

- energy levels
- independence
- strength
- wound healing
- weight



1 Malnutrition Task Force (2013) A review and summary of the impact of malnutrition in older people and the reported costs and benefits of interventions

2 National Records Scotland (2018) Scotland's Population 2017