



# Vegan friendly nutrition support

## **Diabetes and Nutrition Services Community Dietitians**

**Dietary advice if you are  
having problems eating enough.  
A guide for adult service users  
and their carers/relatives.**

Service provided by

**Sirona**  
care & health

## **WARNING:**

**This book is not suitable for individuals with nut allergies**

**This advice is about improving nutrition and may be helpful if you are on a vegan diet and you:**

- have been unintentionally losing weight
- have an ongoing poor appetite
- are only able to eat small amounts
- want to gain some weight gradually
- have been identified at risk of developing a pressure injury.

Some of the information contained in this leaflet may be unsuitable if you have diabetes or end-stage renal disease. If you are worried about your diabetes, please contact your healthcare professional.

## **Improving nutrition**

Many people who are unwell can have problems with eating. This can be upsetting or stressful. Medical treatment, surgery, and some medications can lead to side-effects that often reduce appetite, which may lead to someone eating less than usual.

## **Maintaining good nutrition can:**

- Help prevent weight loss
- Improve your strength and maintain mobility levels
- Maximise your energy levels and keep you feeling good
- Help maintain your skin in good condition
- Support preparation prior to surgery
- Support recovery after illness or an operation
- Support your immune system to fight infections

## Top tips



Aim to eat 'little and often' throughout the day e.g. have three small meals and three snacks or nourishing drinks every day (something every 2-3 hours). Smaller amounts are easier to eat and regularly eating can maintain/improve your appetite.



Feeling hungry? Make the most of it, and eat more when you are feeling hungry e.g. if you are hungry most in the morning, try having a cooked breakfast, or have a nourishing snack if you are hungry between meals.



Eat first, drink later. Drinking with meals can make you feel fuller sooner.



Can't be bothered with cooking? Choose ready-made oven/microwave meals or tinned foods such as baked beans or soups.



Try having a pudding, snack, cereal, soup, or a nourishing drink if you do not feel like eating a meal.



If you are feeling tired choose soft, moist foods which are easier to eat.



Take your time and rest during eating if you need to, have the best bits first!



Include something from each food group at meals to make sure you get a range of nutrients

- Beans, pulses, nuts, tofu, quorn and other proteins
- Potatoes, bread, rice, pasta and other starchy carbohydrates
- Fruit and vegetables
- Dairy alternatives (e.g. soya yoghurt)



Avoid foods and drinks labelled 'low fat'/'low sugar'/'no added sugar'/'diet'/'light' – full fat and sugar products are more nourishing



A small glass of alcohol may stimulate your appetite –try having one 30 minutes before your meal (ask your doctor first to ensure it is suitable with any medication that you take).



Get out – fresh air can often help stimulate your appetite. Try going for a brief stroll or simply step or sit outside for a while before meals. Try to eat in a well ventilated room.



If possible, make meal times sociable by sharing the experience with others. Eating with relatives, friends, informal carers, attending local cafés, pub lunches or visiting voluntary, community or faith organisations with luncheon clubs or events can all help improve your eating experience.



If food shopping is difficult or too tiring, consider alternatives such as supermarket online delivery, community meal delivery services, or private delivery services (such as Wiltshire Farm Foods, Parsley Box and Oakhouse Foods).



Smoking can reduce your appetite. If you do smoke, try not to smoke in the half an hour before your meal. If you wish to give up, ask your GP or nurse for information on local support services.



# Making the most of your food

## How to fortify/enrich your food

It is important to choose food that is energy dense which provides lots of calories (energy) in each mouthful. Fortify your food by adding 1) fats and sugars to increase the calories. 2) nuts and / or pulses to increase protein and calories.

- Choose vegan milk which has calcium added (this should be clearly labelled)
- Try adding soya or coconut milk powder (20-30g) to your usual vegan milk (1 pint) for an enriched milk for extra energy and protein
- Aim to have two tablespoons of nuts, nut powder such as ground almonds or nut butter such as peanut butter each day,

## Proteins

Protein gives our bodies structure as part of our muscles and bones. It is also used for fighting infection, carrying oxygen, growth and repair.

Plant foods can provide all the essential amino acids. These nutrients are protein building blocks that cannot be made by your body. Ensure that most of your meals contain good sources of protein, such as beans, lentils, chickpeas, tofu, soya alternatives to milk and yoghurt, or peanuts.

Aim for a serving of 3 tablespoons with each meal, 3 times per day. Aim for a variety.

If you have:	Fortify by adding:
Breakfast cereals	Nuts, soya cream (or other dairy free creams), vegan coconut milk powder/coconut flour or ground almonds, sugars such as maple syrup, golden syrup, molasses or brown sugar
Soups, casseroles and savoury sauces	Dairy free margarine, dairy free cheese (grated), pulses, nutritional yeast, tofu pieces, tinned coconut milk/cream or vegan powders such as hemp, chickpea, pea or soy
Sweet sauces	Vegan coconut milk powder/coconut flour or ground almonds
Potatoes (boiled, mashed or fried)	Dairy free margarine, dairy free cheese (grated if hard or cream) or dairy free cheese sauce
Cooked vegetables	Dairy free margarine, dairy free cheese (grated if hard or cream), dairy free cheese sauce or olive oil, syrup to slow roasted vegetable (such as parsnips and carrots)
Salads	Vegan mayonnaise, olive oil, full fat salad dressing (such as Italian dressing), tahini paste and /or chopped/mashed avocado, nuts, seeds and olives
Sandwiches	Dairy free margarine, dairy free cheese, dairy free cheese sauce and /or chopped/mashed avocado or chutney and use protein rich fillings such as tofu (fried), falafel, hummus, nut butters and vegan deli meats such as This UK, vegan Quorn and Squeaky Bean
Puddings	Nuts, vegan chocolate, soya cream (or other dairy free creams), vegan coconut milk powder/coconut flour, sugars such as maple syrup/brown, dairy free/soya ice cream /sorbet, or tinned coconut milk/cream

## Nourishing snack ideas

Suitable choices between meals, aim for 2-3 per day

### Savoury

- Oatcakes with dairy free spread and /or dairy free cheese and chutney
- Handful of nuts and/or seeds
- Tortilla chips, crisps (plain/sweet chilli) or crackers with avocado dip/smashed avocado or hummus
- Plain bagel or pitta bread with peanut butter (or other nut butters)
- Crumpet with vegan spread and /or jam/marmalade/ Marmite
- A small bowl of edamame beans (lightly salted, if preferred)
- Vegan sausage rolls and pies such as Linda McCartney, Deliciously Ella or Supermarket's own

### Sweet

- 2-4 bourbon, Oreo, ginger nut or other vegan/vegan friendly biscuits
- Vegan cakes such as Oggs, flap jacks such as Trek and Nakd
- Dairy free chocolate
- Soya yoghurt/dessert
- Porridge made with dairy free milk and maple syrup or jam
- Stewed fruit and dairy free yoghurt or cream
- Vegan jam tarts, fruit pies or crumbles such as Linda McCartney, Deliciously Ella or Supermarket's own
- Teacake with vegan spread and /or jam/marmalade
- Small bowl of breakfast cereal (Weetabix, cornflakes, bran flakes, rice crispies etc) with dairy free milk such as soya or almond milk

## Nourishing drinks

Non-dairy nourishing drinks such as chocolate flavoured soya milk shakes can be purchased from the supermarket. Ensure that you choose, full fat version each time and also full sugar if you do not have diabetes.

However, you can also make your own nourishing drinks. See opposite for a variety of drink recipes:

- blend all the ingredients until smooth
- If you have been advised to have thickened fluids, please thicken to required consistency, with your usual thickener prescribed by your GP
- if using lemonade, add last.





## Nourishing drink recipes

### Dairy Free Smoothie (Serves 1)

200ml sweetened soya milk  
1 heaped tablespoon  
smooth peanut butter  
1 heaped teaspoon cocoa  
1 tablespoon vegetable oil  
1 tablespoon sugar or syrup

#### Per serving

**Calories:** 470kcal

**Protein:** 15.5g

### Fruit Blast (Serves 1)

100ml fresh fruit juice  
1 scoop sorbet  
1 level tablespoon sunflower  
or vegetable oil  
2 heaped teaspoon sugar  
100ml lemonade (not diet or  
sugar free)

#### Per serving

**Calories:** 300kcal

**Protein:** 3g

### Savoury Bloody Mary (Serves 1)

100ml tomato passata  
sauce  
1 teaspoon Vegemite or  
Marmite  
2 tablespoon vegetable oil  
Vegan worcestershire  
sauce/  
black pepper  
100ml lemonade (not diet or  
sugar free)

#### Per serving

**Calories:** 300kcal

**Protein:** 3g

### Virgin Pina Colada (Serves 1)

100ml tinned coconut milk  
(full fat)  
100mls of pineapple juice  
2 ½ tablespoon apricot jam  
2 ½ tablespoon icing sugar  
1 tablespoon golden syrup

#### Per serving

**Calories:** 520kcal

**Protein:** 2g

# Nourishing meal ideas

## Breakfast

Many people find that if they manage even a very small breakfast they often eat better for the rest of the day. Serve the following with a glass of fruit juice

- Cereal with enriched milk and sugar - add a tablespoon of flaxseed or golden linseed which are naturally rich in Omega 3 fatty acids
- Cooked breakfast i.e. 1-2 vegan sausages, mushrooms (fried in oil), baked beans and 1x slice of toast with dairy free spread
- Toast with dairy free spread and jam/marmalade and /or cashew/almond/peanut butter
- A filled roll with banana/mashed avocado and or dairy free cheese

## Main meals

Add a tablespoon flaxseed or golden linseed which are naturally rich in Omega 3 fatty acids

- Mixed bean chilli
- Vegetable/lentil curry and rice
- Sweet potato and chick pea curry and rice
- Cauliflower and kidney bean stew
- Vegan sausage casserole with dumplings
- Nut roast with roasted potatoes and served with vegetables.
- Vegan mince spaghetti bolognese with grated dairy free cheese

## Snacks meals

If you are not managing main meals, try to have at least two snack meals as well as breakfast.

- Lentil soup with soya/oat cream and 1x slice of toast /bread with dairy free spread
- Jacket potato with dairy free spread, baked beans +/- grated dairy free cheese
- Sandwich or roll filled with dairy free cheese, sliced (and fried) tofu, bean burger, hummus, vegan tuna (Tuno), vegan sausage/s or bean paté
- Pasta with tomato sauce and dairy free cheese
- Baked beans or mixed beans e.g. cannelloni, kidney, pinto beans on toast with grated dairy free cheese

## Puddings

- Stewed or canned fruit with dairy free ice cream, custard\* or soya cream
- Dairy free yoghurt such as soya or coconut
- Individual vegan /soy\* dessert
- Rice crispy cakes (rice crispies with melted vegan chocolate +/- vegan marshmallows)
- Vegan pancakes\* with berries and maple syrup

\* see Nourishing dessert recipes

## Nourishing dessert recipes

### Vegan custard (Serves 2)

#### Ingredients

- 1 pint of dairy free milk
- 2 tablespoon corn flour
- 1 tablespoon sugar
- 2-4 drops of vanilla essence
- Add 2 tablespoons of a non-dairy cream, if desired, for a richer creamier custard

#### Per Serving

**Energy:** 205Calories **Protein:** 10g

**Tip. Replace corn flour with coconut flour if you prefer coconut flavour or try adding 1 tablespoon cocoa to make a chocolate sauce.**

#### Method

Mix the flour and sugar with a small amount of the milk in a sauce pan and make into a paste and then gradually add the rest of the milk and whisk on a low heat until the sauce thicken, add vanilla essence or cocoa if preferred.



## Vegan pancakes with berries and maple syrup

(Serves 2-4)

### Ingredients

- 5oz /150g plain flour
- 2 tablespoon caster sugar
- 2 tablespoon baking powder
- Pinch of salt
- 300ml water
- 1 tablespoon oil

### Per small serving

**Energy:** 225 Calories   **Protein:** 6g

### Per large serving

**Energy:** 450 Calories   **Protein:** 12g

**Serving suggestion: add berries, maple syrup and soya cream/ice cream (use preferred quantities)**

### Method

1. Sieve all dry ingredients together into a bowl and mix.
2. Make a well in the centre of the dry ingredients, in which you add the water and oil. Mix thoroughly until all blended - folding the mixture will create more lightness.
3. Heat up a lightly oiled frying pan before dropping the mixture, in small balls, onto the pan. Cook until lightly browned on underside then flip the pancake over and repeat on the other side.

## Soy chocolate dessert (Serves 4)

### Ingredients

- 2 large, ripe avocados halved and stoned
- 1 large banana
- 5 soft prunes/dates
- 6 tablespoon almond milk or coconut milk
- 2 tablespoon smooth peanut butter
- 3 tablespoon cacao powder
- 100g full fat coconut yoghurt
- 2 teaspoons maple syrup or golden syrup

### Per serving

**Calories:** 394kcal **Protein:** 6g

### Method

1. Scoop the avocado flesh into a food processor. Add the chopped banana, prunes, almond or coconut milk, smooth peanut butter and cacao powder.
2. Blend until smooth, adding a little more milk if the blade gets stuck. Scrape down the sides once or twice and blend again.
3. Divide the mixture between 4 small glasses.
4. Mix the coconut yoghurt with the maple syrup or honey and top each pudding with a generous dollop.

## Nutrition boosters

Provide one of the following for each dish.

For example, add one topper to the following: breakfast, lunch main, lunch pudding, evening main and evening pudding

Aim for five toppers each day (each containing at least 50k Calories)

### Calorie boosters (100 calories)

- ¼ avocado
- 2 tablespoons nuts
- 2 tablespoons ground nuts
- 2 tablespoons nut butter
- A banana (medium size/~120g)
- 5 teaspoon sugar
- 2 level tablespoons maple/golden syrup or treacle
- 1 dessert spoon vegetable/sunflower/olive/rapeseed/nut/coconut oil
- 3 tablespoons coconut milk (full fat)
- 2 heaped tablespoons of cooked chickpeas (cooked)
- 2 tablespoons chickpea flour
- 3 tablespoons lentils
- 2 tablespoons double cream alternatives
- 4 tablespoons single cream alternatives

- 2 heaped teaspoon dairy free spreads
- 1 tablespoon (15g) vegan mayonnaise
- 5 tablespoons full fat vegan yoghurt (eg soya yoghurt)
- 2 heaped teaspoons tahini (sesame paste)
- 2 tablespoons hummus
- 2 tablespoons dairy free pesto sauce
- 3 tablespoons dairy free cheese spread (e.g. tofu/soya)
- 1 ½ level tablespoons coconut flour

**Ensure smooth, lump free consistencies by blending (and sieving if necessary) for individuals with swallowing difficulties**



## Store cupboard ideas

If you can't get to the shops regularly, it's useful to have a store of some basic foods. Choose foods and drinks that are full in fat/sugar.

- Long life dairy free milk such as coconut, soya, rice, almond or cashew
- Long life soya/non-dairy desserts
- Oils, and non-dairy spreads
- Vegan mayonnaise and salad dressings
- Nuts, seeds and dried fruit
- Jams and marmalades
- Maple/golden syrup, brown and other sugars
- Alpro ready made soya custard or Birds custard powder
- Nutritional yeast
- Nut butter
- Tinned fruit and vegetables
- Tinned pulses such as lentils and beans
- Breakfast cereals (dairy free such as Weetabix, original porridge oats, cinnamon grahams, Shreddies, bran flakes, dairy free muesli and granola)
- Dairy free biscuits and crackers
- Pasta, rice and other grains such as bulgur wheat, cous cous, quinoa or pearl barley
- Flaxseed or golden linseed
- Longlife tofu
- Tinned vegan tuna (Tuno)

## Important nutrients

With a vegan diet, particular attention is needed to ensure you get enough of the following nutrients:

**Vitamin B12** is made by micro-organisms, and isn't produced by plants. Some vegan foods are fortified with vitamin B12 such as milk products, vegan spreads, nutritional yeast flakes, yeast extracts and breakfast cereals.

- Eat these foods at least twice a day.
- Aim for a daily intake of at least 3mcg (micrograms)
- Supplements: take either at least 10mcg daily or at least 2000mcg weekly

**Omega 3 and Omega 6 fatty acids** are classed as essential because our bodies cannot make them. The essential omega-3 fat is called alpha-linoleic acid (ALA). The essential omega-6 fat is called linoleic acid (LA). Omega-3 and omega-6 fats affect our immune system, brain, nerves and eyes. If you are eating a varied and balanced plant-based diet, it is likely that you are consuming good sources of LA on a regular basis. These include hemp seeds, pumpkin seeds, sunflower seeds, walnuts and soya spread. To meet the ALA recommendations, you would need to eat about a tablespoon of chia seeds or ground linseed, two tablespoons of hemp seeds or six walnut halves daily.





**Iron** is needed for healthy red blood cells. Ensure that your daily diet contains plenty of iron-rich foods. Good sources of iron include lentils, chickpeas, beans, tofu, cashew nuts, chia seeds, ground linseeds, hemp seeds, pumpkin seeds, kale, dried apricots, dried figs, raisins, quinoa and fortified breakfast cereal

- Try to have 3 portions of iron rich foods daily.
- If you are eating a food rich in iron, add a good source of vitamin C to help your body absorb the iron, such as pepper, broccoli, cabbage, Brussels sprouts, kiwi fruit, oranges, strawberries, pineapple, grapefruit or orange juice
- Avoid drinking tea or coffee with meals as these contain tannins which may reduce the absorption of iron.

## What to do if you continue to experience problems

If you continue to experience problems such as ongoing weight loss despite following the above dietary advice, start to keep a food diary and contact your GP for advice.

Your GP will consider if further medical tests are appropriate, and can also refer you onto a specialist dietitian.

### Let us know what you think and get involved

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\*Calls from landlines are charged up to 10p per minute; calls from mobiles vary, please check with your network provider. This is not a premium-rate number.

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**Date of creation** 09/2020 **Date for review** 09/2022 **URN** 0106



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