

## Where can I find out more?

There are lots of places where people can go for help and support.

### For general guidance on healthy eating:

- The **NHS** has a special section dedicated to providing help and advice to older people who may be concerned about their weight: [www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/keeping-your-weight-up-in-later-life](http://www.nhs.uk/live-well/healthy-weight/keeping-your-weight-up-in-later-life)
- The **Malnutrition Task Force** has practical information about eating well on their website: [www.malnutritiontaskforce.org.uk](http://www.malnutritiontaskforce.org.uk)
- Check out **BAPEN's** resources that include self-screening tools and advice about putting on weight: [www.malnutritionselfscreening.org/about-malnutrition.html](http://www.malnutritionselfscreening.org/about-malnutrition.html)
- **Hertfordshire Independent Living Service** has booklets available for download with information on good nutrition, plus advice on eating well with a variety of medical conditions (such as dysphagia, dementia, and diabetes): [www.hertsindependentliving.org/resources](http://www.hertsindependentliving.org/resources)

### To find local support services in Hertfordshire:

- Call **HertsHelp** on 0300 123 4044, they can tell you about services in your area or check out their website: [www.hertshelp.net](http://www.hertshelp.net)

- **Hertfordshire Independent Living Service** provides meals on wheels across the county for people who find it difficult to safely source and cook food for themselves. HILS meals clients can also access free dietetics and nutrition support. Find out more by calling **0330 2000 103**, or by visiting the website: [www.hertsindependentliving.org/meals](http://www.hertsindependentliving.org/meals)

- Call your local **District Council** to ask about their community public health initiatives and services.

If you are very concerned, speak to your GP about getting specialist support.

## Contact us:

0330 2000 103 (local rate number)

[info@hertsindependentliving.org](mailto:info@hertsindependentliving.org)

[www.hertsindependentliving.org](http://www.hertsindependentliving.org)

[@Hertsindliving](https://twitter.com/Hertsindliving) [f Hertsindliving](https://www.facebook.com/Hertsindliving)



Hertfordshire  
**Independent Living Service**  
Supporting your independence

## UK Malnutrition Awareness Week

14th to 20th October 2019



**UK MALNUTRITION  
AWARENESS  
WEEK**

#MAW2019

## Malnutrition screening and information pack

This screening and information pack has been designed to help you start a conversation about healthy eating and malnutrition with an older person, and to share simple ways of spotting if someone may be at risk. It contains useful information and fun activities which can be used in a variety of settings, such as:

- **Social and leisure groups**
- **Lunch clubs**
- **Day care or residential settings**
- **At home with friends and family members**

## What's this all about?

UK Malnutrition Awareness Week is an annual campaign which aims to get everyone talking about nutrition! Few of us could imagine that in a country where food is everywhere, around one in ten people over 65 may be malnourished.



## What is malnutrition?

Malnutrition can mean many different things, but for older people it is generally characterised by unintentional weight loss and/or low body weight. This can often go unrecognised until the person starts having serious health and wellbeing issues. These can include: a weakened immune system, increased risk of infection, muscle weakness, higher risk of falls and fractures, and even kidney problems.

There are many reasons why someone might become malnourished. People over the age of 65 are at increased risk, especially if they:

- **Have a long-term health condition**, such as diabetes, kidney disease, Crohn's disease;
- **Have a progressive health condition**, such as cancer, or dementia;
- **Find it difficult to source food**, perhaps due to poor mobility, difficulty chewing and swallowing, sight or hearing loss;
- **Are experiencing difficult social situations**, such as bereavement, social isolation, living on a low income, caring responsibilities.



## How to use this pack

on their answers, they feel that they need some advice – simply turn over the wheel to read out the tailored guidance on the back of the wheel.

- We recommend that you use the Nutrition Wheel alongside the rest of the information in this pack. You can find a helpful video of it in action, on the Wessex Academic Health Science Network website: [www.wessexahsn/projects/236/nutrition-wheel](http://www.wessexahsn/projects/236/nutrition-wheel).

If someone thinks that they may be at risk of being malnourished, it is important that they do not become distressed. There are many simple changes that can lead to significant improvements and help is available. Check out the advice on the back of this screening pack for information about where they can find more help.

### 2) Posters

Your pack should include two posters – one with tips on staying well-hydrated, and another with some useful advice on increasing calorie intake. These can be stuck up anywhere that older people are likely to see them, such as a communal noticeboard, or on the fridge.

### 3) Guess Again!

These factsheets include a fun quiz with True or False statements about eating for good health; and the true-life story of Mrs Bunn, with discussion questions to help you get the conversation started.

### 4) Spotting the Signs of Weight Loss

This helpsheet includes useful tips to help recognise when someone is losing weight and information about how they can access support. You may want to photocopy and share this with group members so that they can find out more.

## What does this pack contain?

**Information** about the campaign and malnutrition.

**A Nutrition Wheel** to help spot if someone is at risk of malnutrition.

**Posters** with useful tips for healthy eating and hydration.

**Guess Again!** factsheets with a fun quiz and questions to help get the conversation started.

**Spotting the Signs of Weight Loss** information sheet to help recognise malnutrition.

**This pack contains a number of resources which you can use with your club members, friends, or loved ones, to get a better understanding of nutrition as people age.**

### 1) The Nutrition Wheel

This colourful wheel has been designed to help get people talking about nutrition and to identify anyone who may be at risk of being malnourished.

- The purple outer wheel asks four key questions to spot people who may be at risk of malnutrition. If someone answers 'yes' to any of these questions, use the questions marked A-D on the inner wheel to help figure out why.
- The questions on the inner wheel help the person understand the barriers they may be facing to eating and drinking enough. If, based



# Spotting the signs of weight loss

There are several signs that you can look out for to check if someone is losing weight unintentionally. If you are concerned that you, or someone you know, may be affected, see the back of this leaflet for details about who to contact.

Their dentures and glasses no longer fit.

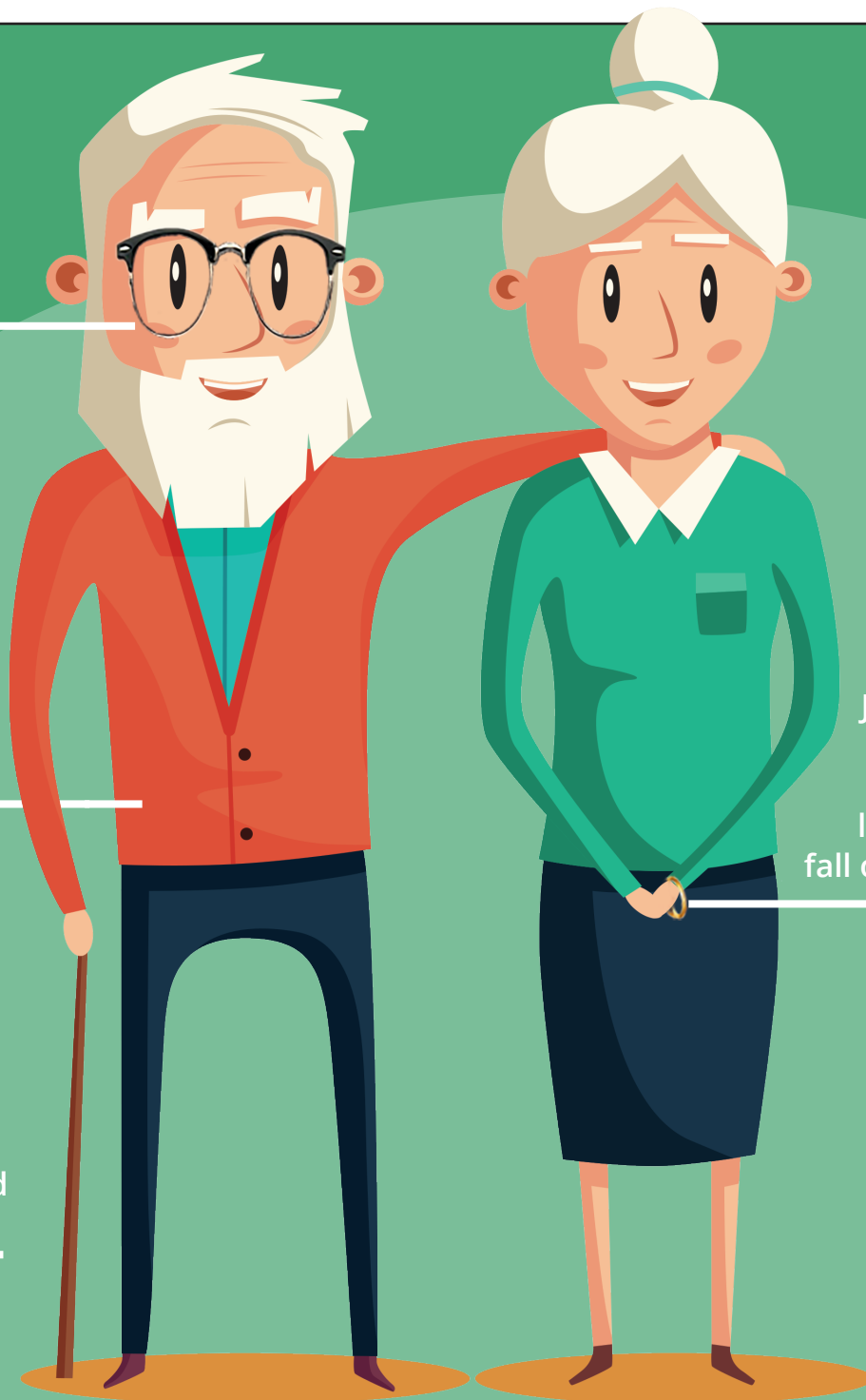
Their clothing is looser, especially around waists and collars.

Their cupboards are bare, or food is out of date.

They seem more tired and lethargic than before.

Jewellery such as rings and bracelets are loose and may fall off frequently.

They seem to become ill more often and recover very slowly.



# There are lots of places where people can go for help and support

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The **Malnutrition Task Force** has practical information about eating well on their website: [www.malnutritiontaskforce.org.uk](http://www.malnutritiontaskforce.org.uk)

Check out **BAPEN's** resources that include self-screening tools and advice about putting on weight: [www.malnutritionselfscreening.org/about-malnutrition.html](http://www.malnutritionselfscreening.org/about-malnutrition.html).

## To find local support services in Hertfordshire:

Call **HertsHelp** on 0300 123 4044, they can tell you about services in your area or check out their website: [www.hertshelp.net](http://www.hertshelp.net)

Look up **Hertfordshire Independent Living Service's** extensive literature on healthy eating for older people, this includes eating with conditions such as dysphagia, dementia, and diabetes: [www.hertsindependentliving.org/resources](http://www.hertsindependentliving.org/resources)

Call your local **District Council** to ask about their community public health initiatives and services.

If you are very concerned, speak to your GP about getting specialist support.



# Keeping hydrated: top tips!

Not drinking enough can make us feel tired, dizzy, and even affect our memory. It can also cause constipation, nasty water infections, and increase the likelihood of having a fall.

**Tip 1:** Aim to drink between six to eight cups of fluid each day, that's around three pints. Try to have at least one nourishing drink such as a glass of milk, or a milky coffee.



**Tip 2:** Variety is the spice of life! Fruit cordials, juice, tea, and milk are all great fluid sources and come in lots of different flavours. Have a selection to hand to make drinking more interesting.



**Tip 3:** Do you find it hard to hold cups, or tip glasses up enough to drink from them? Try using a smaller mug with a wider handle, or a shallow glass. Plastic cups and glasses are also lighter and easier to hold.



**Did you know:** As we get older, our sense of thirst can reduce – but healthy older adults still need the same amount of fluid!



**Tip 4:** Hydration is not only about drinking. Fluid-rich foods such as soup, jelly, yoghurt, rice pudding and cereal with milk can all help to boost your fluid intake.

**Tip 5:** It can be difficult to remember to drink enough. Use a fluid chart to keep track of how much you are drinking, or a jug - like the one in the picture. This jug is one of thousands provided free to all HILS meals on wheels clients to help them stay hydrated.



# Guess Again!

## Malnutrition Myth Busting

**Sugar and fats are bad and should be avoided**

**FALSE:** These are usually necessary parts of a healthy, balanced diet if eaten in moderation. They are particularly important if you are losing weight unintentionally.

**Only very thin people are at risk of malnutrition**

**FALSE:** It doesn't matter how slim you are, losing a significant amount of weight unintentionally may be a symptom of malnutrition.

**Your appetite can get smaller as you get older**

**TRUE:** But this doesn't mean that you should eat less. If you can't manage big meals, you can try having small, frequent meals and snacks with high energy and protein food and fluids.

**It is better to weigh less as you get older**

**FALSE:** Older people, particularly those who are 70+, may need the extra energy reserves to fight off disease and recover more quickly from injuries.

**Women are twice as likely to be malnourished as men**

**TRUE:** But men can also be at risk of losing weight unintentionally.

**Drinks high in caffeine do not count towards good hydration**

**FALSE:** All drinks will help you stay hydrated, including tea and coffee. Even some foods such as jelly and soup will help!

**Malnutrition is more likely to affect people in hospitals and care homes**

**FALSE:** Research suggests 93% of malnutrition affects people living in the community - that's people living independently in their own homes.

**You are less active as you get older, so you don't need to eat as much**

**TRUE:** However, as we age our bodies don't process nutrients as well as they used to. This means that we need to make sure we eat plenty of nutritious, protein-rich foods.

**It is normal to get thinner in later life**

**FALSE:** It is not normal to lose weight as you age. It is important to maintain a healthy weight. Take a look at the rest of the resources in this pack to find out more.



# Guess Again!

## Malnutrition Myth Busting

### Who is at risk of malnutrition:

Malnutrition can affect anyone, but you could be at higher risk if you are aged over 65, have a long-term health condition, or are experiencing a difficult financial or social situation (for example, if you are isolated or find it challenging to source and prepare food).

A few years ago, 90-year old Mrs Bunn found herself losing weight unintentionally. She was going through a difficult period in her life and was caring full-time for her disabled daughter. Mrs Bunn realised that she needed some extra support when her weight dropped by 10% in just a few months.



### Mrs Bunn's story

### What kind of help is available?

Fortunately, Mrs Bunn was a HILS meals on wheels client, which meant she had access to a free nutrition support service, as well as receiving hot meals delivered to her home. One of the team went out to visit her and designed a personal food plan to help her put on weight. This included:

- **Mini meals**, these are small but high energy meals which can be easier to manage for people with small appetites;
- **Free Nutrition Boosts**, which are high energy snacks delivered alongside hot meals on wheels to help people to easily increase how much they eat;

- **Information and fortified food recipes**, fortifying your food simply means adding calories and nutrients by adding things like full-fat cream and milk powder to regular meals and snacks.

By making these simple changes, Mrs Bunn managed to stop losing weight and actually gained enough to be considered a healthy weight again! She says she not only feels healthier, but is better able to care for her daughter.

HILS is only one place where you can go for help and support if you think you may be undernourished. You may want to look at the resources on the back of this screening pack, or on the Spotting the Signs of Weight Loss factsheet for more information.

What do you think?

**You may want to use Mrs Bunn's story and these questions to talk about malnutrition with your group, friends, or loved ones.**

- 1) Is there anything in Mrs Bunn's story which you recognise, or can sympathise with?
- 2) Did her story surprise you? Was there anything unexpected?
- 3) What do you think about the support she received? How easy, or difficult, do you think it would be to make these changes?
- 4) Can you think of other reasons people might start losing weight unintentionally? How do you think malnutrition might affect peoples' health?

# Simple swaps

How to increase your calories in **five** easy bites!



**1) Grab a pint...** of nourishing drinks, such as milkshakes with added milk powder, or hot chocolate with cream. Milk powder is easy to find in any local shop at a low price, and is usually kept near the UHT or baking section.

**Did you know?** You can even add milk powder to savoury dishes such as soups and sauces.

## 2) Eat regularly.

Six small meals are just as good as three bigger ones. If you struggle to finish what's on your plate, try to build in regular snacks throughout the day. Why not plan this around something you do already, like a favourite TV programme?



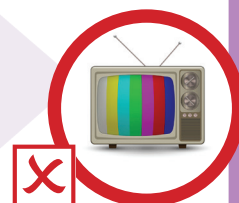
**3) Simple swaps for big results.** Simply switching low fat, or low sugar options can help you to maintain or put on weight. Try using full fat milk, spreads, and cheese. Or switch to fruit juice instead of squash to get more calories, and also more nutrients.

**4) Focus on your favourites.** If there is a food that you particularly like, try to eat more of it. Perhaps if you like a biscuit, try to eat one every time you have a cup of tea.

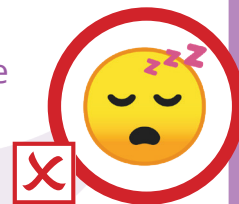


**5) Forgetful about food?** If you find yourself forgetting to eat, or getting distracted before you finish your meal, there are a couple of things you can try.

- Turn off the TV or radio, keeping distractions to a minimum can help you focus on your food.



- Try to eat before you start feeling tired; fatigue is a common reason for losing your appetite.



- If you are getting bored of your food, try adding condiments like sweet chutneys or mustards.



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