

Unintentional weight loss

It is normal to lose your appetite when you are sick, but you do not want to lose weight. If you have recently lost weight without trying, you should speak to your doctor or dietitian. Unintentional weight loss is one of the common signs of malnutrition.

What are the signs of unintentional weight loss?

It is important to recognise and address the signs of unintentional weight loss as early as possible.

Some clues include:

- *Eating less food than you normally do or skipping meals*
- *Not enjoying your favourite foods*
- *Your clothes, jewellery, belt buckle or dentures are becoming loose*
- *Your face is looking drawn*



Tips to stop the numbers on the scales dropping



- Unless you have a medical need to avoid certain foods, you do not need to follow any kind of strict diet.
- Eat with others. Being social can encourage you to eat more.
- Eat small amounts of food often. Try six small nourishing snacks a day rather than three larger meals.
- A source of protein should be included at every meal and snack. Protein-rich foods include meat, seafood, eggs, dairy, tofu, legumes and nuts.
- If you are in residential care or hospital, speak to your doctor and/or nurses about a high protein/high energy diet. Ask for a full nutritional assessment from the dietitian.