

### ADVICE FOR CONSTIPATION

When your appetite is poor, you can miss out on the foods that help your bowels work normally. The suggestions in this leaflet will remind you of foods to choose and how much fluid you should drink. If you continue to be constipated tell your nurse or doctor as you may need some medication. Gentle exercise can also help keep your bowels moving.

#### Why is Fibre needed?

Fibre helps keep your bowels healthy and as it passes through the bowel it absorbs water that makes your stools softer and easier to pass.

#### Where is Fibre found?

Dietary fibre is part of the food we eat that is not digested. It comes from plant and cereal foods, such as fruit, vegetables, breakfast cereals and bread. Some people may call it "Roughage".

#### How much fluid should I try to drink?

As well as increasing fibre, it is essential to have plenty of fluid – any type will do. Try to aim for at least 8 cups of fluid per day.

#### How can I add Fibre to my diet?

##### **Cereals**

Choose whole wheat cereals e.g. porridge, Bran flakes, Shredded Wheat, Muesli, Weetabix, or try the "bite sized" cereals such as Fruitibix or Shreddies.

##### **Bread, Crispbreads and Cereal Bars**

Choose wholemeal, wholegrain, granary or high fibre white varieties.

##### **Cakes and Snacks**

Choose snacks, which include dried fruit e.g. fruit cake or loaf, eccles cakes, mince pies etc. Choose biscuits such as digestives, oat biscuits, muesli bars, wholemeal crackers, Ryvita or oat cakes.

##### **Dried Fruit and Nuts**

Snacks of dried fruit are a good source of fibre eg. Prunes, sultanas, apricots, figs etc If these are too dry, try stewing or soak in water or fruit juice for a short time to soften. Nuts are also a useful snack.

##### **Peas, Beans, lentils etc**

All pulses are a good source of fibre, add them to soups and stews. Try marrowfat peas or baked beans with meals.

##### **Fruit and Vegetables**

All kinds including fresh, frozen, dried or tinned. To make them easier to manage stew fruit, add sauces to vegetables e.g. cauliflower cheese.

##### **Rice, Pasta, Potatoes**

Try wholemeal or brown rice and pasta or potatoes cooked in their skins