

Adding Protein and Calories to Your Diet



Image by tirachardz on Freepik

Dietitian: _____

Contact: _____

Why do I need to add calories and protein to my diet?

- To get more calories and protein when you do not feel hungry and are not eating enough.
- To keep your weight the same, build muscle, or prevent more weight loss.
- To gain weight that you might have lost.
- To help you get extra protein and calories when you have a medical condition that increases the amount of protein and calories you need.
- To help you heal while you are sick, or while you are getting better.

Why are foods that have a lot of protein and calories important?

- High-protein foods do the following:
 - Help you to heal after you are sick or injured
 - Can help keep your muscles strong
- High-calorie foods do the following:
 - Give you the extra calories you need so you do not lose weight
 - Help your body use protein to build muscle
 - Give you more energy for your daily life

This booklet provides ideas on how to eat high-protein, high-calorie foods when you do not feel hungry.

Use the ideas in this booklet until you feel better, have gained the weight you lost, or until your healthcare provider tells you that you can go back to your usual diet.







How to add more protein and calories

- Eat your biggest meal when your appetite is best.
- Eat often during the day.
 - Try to eat every 1 to 2 hours.
 - Try setting a timer to remind yourself to eat.
 - Eat smaller, more frequent meals and snacks.
 - Bring snacks if you are planning to be away from home. See the lists below for food ideas.
 - Try a few mouthfuls even if you are not hungry.
- Choose higher calorie drinks such as milk, milkshakes, smoothies, nutrition supplement drinks, cream soups, or juice.
- Take your medicines with nutrition supplements or milk unless the instructions on the medicine say do not take them with milk or dairy products.
- Add extra cream and sugar to tea or coffee.
- Eat foods that taste good to you even if this becomes repetitive.
- Continue to eat familiar foods but make small changes to recipes to increase protein and calories.
- Try the following to make preparing meals easier:
 - Keep your freezer, refrigerator, and cupboards full of foods that are ready to eat or easily prepared, such as frozen lasagna and pudding cups.
 - Ask friends and family to help prepare meals. Prepare food in large amounts, divide into single-serving containers, and freeze.
 - Try community meal programs such as Meals on Wheels, or try home delivery from restaurants or grocery stores.

Try to have high-calorie and high-protein food at each meal or snack. Below are some examples.

High-calorie dairy foods	High-calorie foods
Butter, margarine, ghee 3.25% milk Buttermilk Chocolate milk Cheese, paneer, cream cheese, ricotta, cottage cheese Cream (half and half, or whipping) Eggnog, ice cream, condensed milk Greek yogurt with 3.25% fat or higher Skim milk powder Sour cream Cream soups	Baked pastries, muffins, waffles, pancakes, gulab jamun Oils (canola, olive, safflower, avocado) Chocolate, sweets, candies, barfi Coconut cream or coconut milk Mayonnaise Sugar, maple syrup, jams, honey Wheat germ, brewer's yeast Bubble tea Dessert soup (red bean or sesame) Glutinous rice balls with red bean paste
Animal protein foods	Vegetarian protein foods
All meat (beef, pork, goat, lamb) All poultry (chicken, turkey, duck) All fish Eggs (scrambled, boiled, egg drop soup) Protein powder made with whey *consider dark meat or skin-on for additional calories.	Beans and lentils (chickpeas, kidney beans, dahl) Soy products (soybeans, edamame, tofu, dessert tofu, soy milk, tempeh, soy cheese, soy yogurt, textured soy protein) Nuts and nut butter (peanut butter, powdered peanut butter, cashews, walnuts, pistachios) Seeds (sunflower, chia, sesame, hemp hearts) Protein powder made with soy, rice, pea, or hemp
Nutrition supplement drinks	Fruits and vegetables
Breakfast shakes like Carnation Breakfast Essentials® or Kirkland Signature™ Protein shakes like Ensure® or Boost®, Equate™, Fairlife®, or Kirkland™, Rumble® High-protein smoothies	Avocado Coconut Dried fruit Mashed potatoes

Below are examples of how to include more protein or calories in your meal. The amounts are just an example.

Instead of:		Try:
Oatmeal		
½ cup regular oats, ½ cup skim milk, 1 tsp brown sugar, ¼ blueberries		½ cup regular oats, ¼ cup whipping cream, ¼ cup 3.25% milk, 2 tsp brown sugar, ¼ cup blueberries, 2 Tbsp walnuts
Congee		
½ cup rice, ½ cup water		½ cup rice, ½ cup broth, 2 tsp sesame oil, 2 tsp peanuts, 2 Tbsp minced meat, fish, or eggs
Dahl		
¼ cup yellow lentils, ¼ cup water onion, spices		¼ cup yellow lentils, ½ cup water, 1 Tbsp ghee, 2 Tbsp whipping cream, onion, spices
Soup and Sandwich		
2 pieces bread, 2 slices deli meat, 1 slice tomato, 2 tsp mustard 1 cup beef barley soup		2 pieces bread, 3 slices deli meat, 1/3 avocado sliced, 1 Tbsp mayonnaise 1 cup cream of tomato soup made with whipping cream
Chicken dinner		
3 oz chicken breast, ½ cup mashed potatoes, ½ cup green beans		3 oz dark meat, 2 Tbsp gravy, ½ cup mashed potatoes made with whipping cream or butter, ½ cup green beans with butter
Yogurt snack		
½ cup 0% regular yogurt 2 Tbsp cereal		½ cup 10% Greek yogurt 2 tsp peanut butter 2 Tbsp granola

To change amounts to metric, see the last page.

Breakfast

Eggs

- Omelet with cheese and vegetables, with extra egg yolks
- Eggs on buttered toast or English muffin, with hollandaise sauce
- Scrambled eggs or scrambled tofu, with cheese or extra cream or coconut milk
- French toast, pancakes, or waffles, with high-calorie toppings such as butter, syrup, fruit sauce or canned fruit, ricotta cheese, Greek yogurt, or whipped cream

Bread and pastries

- Toasted bagel or bread with almond butter, and honey or fruit spread
- Croissant, scone, or pineapple bun, with butter and jam
- Banana bread with peanut butter, and canned fruit

Cereals

- Hot cereal made with 3.25% milk and egg whites, topped with butter, raisins, almonds, and brown sugar
- Granola with 3.25% milk or Greek yogurt, with fruit

Soups

- Congee with diced meat or century egg, drizzled with sesame oil, crushed peanut, and pork floss
- Miso soup with rice, tofu or tamagoyaki, natto, or steamed fish

Smoothies

- Smoothie made with peanut butter, tofu, or Greek yogurt

Lunch and dinner

Soups and stews

- Squash or lentil soup, made with coconut milk or whipping cream
- Dhal (lentil soup) with naan, chapattis, or roti
- Curry with extra ghee, whipping cream, and paneer
- Chili with extra beans and meat, or sprinkled with grated cheese
- Casseroles with meat, chicken or fish, and cream sauce
- Kimchi jjigae with pork belly and egg

Hand-held foods

- Sandwiches such as egg salad, tuna salad, salmon salad, turkey, chicken, avocado and cheese, peanut butter, or hummus
- Sandwich filling on crackers or by itself
- Burgers (vegetarian, chicken, or beef) with cheese, mayonnaise, and avocado
- Tacos with meat, beans, guacamole, sour cream, and cheese
- Flaky pastry meat pies, sausage rolls, or quiche
- Samosas with meat filling
- Pita bread or pita chips, with tzatziki or hummus

Mixed dishes

- Pasta with meat, chicken, or cheese, with oil or butter on noodles
- Baked beans on top of potatoes or toast
- Stir-fry with diced chicken, meat, seafood, or tofu
- Fried noodles with seafood or meat, and egg
- BBQ crispy pork belly, with skin on

Snacks

Baked foods

- Protein bar or granola bar
- Muffin with butter, peanut butter, or cheese
- Bannock with jam
- Pineapple tarts, egg tarts, or mooncakes

Soft foods

- Greek yogurt (3% milk fat or higher) with chia seeds, hemp hearts, wheat germ, or granola
- Dessert tofu or chia seed pudding with fruit cocktail
- Desserts made with eggs and milk, such as bread pudding, custard, soufflé, or crepes

Other snacks

- Crackers or chips with bean dip, guacamole, or hummus
- Trail mix with nuts, seeds, and dried fruit
- Nachos with meat, beans, cheese, sour cream, and guacamole
- Peanut butter with apple slices, celery sticks, or crackers
- Cheese, with grapes or other fruit
- Edamame sprinkled with salt and sesame seed oil
- Hard-boiled or devilled eggs

Drinks

Replace your water, black tea, and black coffee with these ideas:

Hot drinks

- Coffee latté or tea latté made with 3.25% milk
- Hot malted milk (Ovaltine®, Horlicks™) or hot chocolate made with 3.25% milk and topped with whipped cream
- Steamed 3.25% milk or soy milk with honey

Cold drinks

- Bubble tea made with 3.25% milk or coconut milk
- Smoothies made with Greek yogurt, tofu, chia seeds, ice cream, or 3.25% milk
- Iced coffee latté or tea latté made with 3.25% milk.
- Malted milk (Ovaltine®, Horlicks™) or chocolate milk made with 3.25% milk and topped with whipped cream
- Nutritional supplement drinks like Ensure®, or Boost®, Equate™, Fairlife®, Kirkland™, or Rumble®

Tips from your dietitian:

If you would like more information:



[Dietitian Services at HealthLink BC](#)

Call 8-1-1 to speak to a dietitian or go to the website to connect online. Dietitians can answer your questions and develop a nutrition plan for you. To get service in another language, simply state the language you are looking for and an interpreter will join the call.



[Fraser Health Outpatient Dietitian Services.](#)

Ask your doctor to write you a referral to see a dietitian. The dietitian will work with you to develop a nutrition plan for you.



[Unlock Food website from Dietitians of Canada](#)

Find information on nutrition, food and healthy eating, as well as recipes, videos and online tools.

Equal Amounts		
Imperial		Metric
1/2 tsp	=	2.5 mL
1 tsp	=	5 mL
1 Tbsp	=	15 mL
1/4 cup	=	60 mL
1/2 cup	=	125 mL
1 cup	=	250 mL
1 oz	=	28 g
3 oz	=	85 g

tsp = teaspoon

oz = ounces

Tbsp = tablespoon

g = grams

mL = millilitres

www.fraserhealth.ca

This information does not replace the advice given to you by your healthcare provider.

Catalogue #267980 (May 2023)

For more copies: patienteduc.fraserhealth.ca

