



# Sports Nutrition

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## HOW TO GAIN WEIGHT HEALTHFULLY

*The over-all plan:* In order to gain weight, you have to eat more calories than you expend. Theoretically, this means eating an additional 500 calories per day to gain one pound per week. Some people, however, have difficulty gaining weight and have to eat far more than that - perhaps an extra 1,000 calories per day.

Easy ways to boost your calorie intake include eating:

- an extra snack, such as a bed time peanut butter sandwich with a glass of milk.
- larger-than-normal portions at meals, such as *two* sandwiches instead of only one.
- higher calorie foods, such as cranapple instead of orange juice.

*Protein:* Many people who want to gain weight think a high protein diet will help them bulk up. False. Extra exercise builds muscle, not extra protein. Although you may need a *little* extra protein to build muscle, your normal diet undoubtedly offers more than enough. The average American generally eats two to three times the recommended amount of protein. Hence, you *do not* need to spend money on protein powders, pills and special supplements. Instead, spend your money on wholesome carbohydrates such as juice, bananas and raisins. These carbohydrates will fuel your muscles and enhance your ability to do more muscle-building exercise.

*Fats:* Although fats are the most concentrated form of calories, you can successfully and healthfully gain weight by choosing foods that get most of their calories from carbohydrates rather than fats. If you insist on boosting your calories with high fat foods, at least make heart-healthy choices such as corn oil margarine, olive and canola oils, old-fashioned peanut butter and salad dressings made with olive oil. Limit your intake of saturated fats such as bacon, butter, french fries, chicken skin, juicy steaks and ice cream.

*Food choices:* The following suggestions can help you boost your calorie intake.

**JUICE:** Apple, cranberry, cranapple, grape, pineapple and apricot juices have more calories than grapefruit, orange and tomato. To increase the calories in frozen OJ, add less water than the directions suggest.

**FRUIT:** Bananas, pineapple, raisins, dates, dried apricots and other dried fruits have more calories than watery fruits such as grapes, plums and peaches.

**MILK:** To boost the calorie value of milk, add 1 cup powdered milk to one quart of 2% milk. Then add Carnation Instant Breakfast, Nestlé's Quick, Ovaltine, malt powder or other flavorings. By mixing these by the quartful, they will be ready and waiting for you in the refrigerator. You can also make blender drinks such as milk shakes, fruit smoothies and frappes.

**HOT CEREAL:** By cooking hot cereal with *milk* instead of water, you'll boost both calories and nutritional value. Add lots of mix-ins, such as powdered milk, margarine, peanut butter, walnuts, sunflower seeds, wheat germ and dried fruit.

**COLD CEREAL:** Choose *dense* cereals (as opposed to flaked and puffed types), such as granola, muesli, Grape-nuts and Wheat Chex. Top with raisins, banana and other fruit.

**TOAST:** Spread with generous amounts of peanut butter and jam.

**SANDWICHES :** Select hearty, dense breads (as opposed to "fluffy" types), such as sprouted wheat, honey bran, rye and pumpernickel -- the thicker sliced, the better! Spread with a modest amount of margarine or mayonnaise. Generously stuff with tuna, chicken, lean roast beef and other sandwich fillings. Good ol' peanut butter and jelly is an inexpensive, healthful and high calorie choice.

**SOUPS:** Hearty lentil, split pea, minestrone and barley soups have more calories than brothy chicken and beef types (unless the latter are chock-full of lots of veggies and meat). To make canned soups such as tomato or chowder more substantial, add evaporated milk in place of water or regular milk, or add extra powdered milk. Garnish with (low fat) cheese and croutons.

**MEATS:** Although beef, pork and lamb tend to have more calories than chicken or fish, they also tend to have more saturated fat. Hence, you should eat them in moderation, taking care to select the leanest cuts. You can boost the calorie value of lean meat, chicken or fish by sautéing them in olive oil, canola oil or margarine, as well as by adding wine sauce and bread-crumbs toppings.

**BEANS, LEGUMES:** Lentils, split pea soup, chili with beans, hummus and other foods made with dried beans are not only high in calories but also excellent sources of protein and carbohydrates.

**VEGETABLES:** Peas, corn, carrots, winter squash and beets have more calories than green beans, broccoli, summer squash and other watery vegetables. Top with margarine, slivered almonds or grated cheese.

**SALADS:** What may start out being low-calorie lettuce can be quickly converted into a substantial meal by adding cottage cheese, garbanzo beans (chick peas), sunflower seeds, assorted vegetables, chopped walnuts, raisins, tuna fish, lean meat, croutons and salad dressing (preferably olive oil based).

**POTATO:** Add margarine and extra powdered milk to mashed potato. On baked potato, use sour cream and gravy sparingly because these saturated fats are poor choices in terms of heart health.

**DESSERTS:** By selecting desserts with nutritional value, you can enjoy a treat as well as nourish your body. Try frozen yogurt, oatmeal-raisin cookies, Fig Newtons, chocolate pudding, stewed fruit compote or pumpkin pie. Even blueberry muffins, corn bread with honey, banana bread and other sweet breads can double as dessert, as can any of the numerous low-fat baked goods available in grocery stores.

**SNACKS:** A substantial afternoon and/or evening snack is an excellent way to boost your calorie intake. If you don't feel hungry, just think of the food as a "weight gain medicine" that you *have* to take. Some healthful snack choices include fruit-flavored yogurt, frozen yogurt, (low fat) cheese and crackers, peanuts, sunflower seeds, almonds, granola, pretzels, English muffins, bagels, bran muffins, pizza, peanut butter crackers, milk shakes, Instant Breakfast drinks, hot cocoa, bananas, dried fruits and sandwiches.

**ALCOHOL:** Moderate amounts of beer and wine, along with accompanying snacks such as peanuts and pretzels, can add extra calories and stimulate your appetite. Because alcohol offers little nutritional value, do not substitute it for juices, milk or other wholesome beverages.

**Conclusion:** By taking the prescribed 500 to 1,000 additional calories per day, you should see some weight gain. Be sure to include moderate amounts of muscle-building exercise so that you bulk up rather than get fat.

If you don't gain weight after two weeks of *consistent* higher calorie eating at three meals every day plus snacks, look at your family members to see if you inherited a naturally trim physique. Also keep in mind that most skinny people gain weight as they get older. Your turn will likely come too! Until then, enjoy being lean and light. Remember that you can be a good athlete without being bulky.