



# Weight Gain



Good nutrition is important to help the body cope with illness, resist infections, heal wounds and recover from surgery. It's also important for maintaining energy levels, and stamina.

Your body needs a certain amount of calories to keep your organs going, for cellular activity and other bodily functions. This is called your Resting Metabolic Rate. To gain weight and strength, you need to eat and drink more calories than you are using. Weight loss happens if your body uses up more energy or kilojoules than what you eat. To gain weight you need to either eat more kilojoules or use up less energy. But it's not just about eating more. It's important to choose the right foods to eat, in order to help you gain weight. Sometimes this simply means choosing foods that are higher in kilojoules, rather than eating larger amounts of food. In order to gain weight, you need to eat more than your usual maintenance calorie intake but not so much as to just store the excess calories and get fat. You need to gain weight in the right and healthiest way. Weight gain requires eating calorie-rich but also nutrient-rich foods, not just high-calorie foods with lots of fat, sugar, or empty calories. The goal is to choose foods that are packed with vitamins, minerals, nutrients, and calories so each bite is loaded with good nutrition. You don't have to exclusively eat high-fat foods to gain weight. Actually, you'll gain weight more steadily and safely if you adjust your diet slightly to include denser foods and extra condiments.

## Foods to Eat:

You need to eat high energy foods at every meal. These include meat, egg, fried tofu, fried noodle, omelet, peanuts, fried fish, shrimp, avocado, dumpling, sweet potato, sweet soup, soy milk, soya beans, banh mi, vegetables fried in oil, peanut butter, condensed milk, cream, cheese, ice cream, fried spring roll, chicken, rice snacks, dried fruit. **You should aim to eat 1-2 serves of protein rich food (meat, egg, beans, and tofu) everyday.**

### One serve of protein is:

65-100g cooked meat or chicken (1/2 cup mince or the size of a deck of cards) OR  
80-120g cooked fish OR  
1/2 cup cooked legumes (kidney beans, soya beans)  
OR  
2 eggs OR  
1/3 cup mixed nuts OR  
300g tofu



High protein foods



Dense fruit and vegetables



High energy drinks

It's also really important to eat lots of fruit and vegetables when trying to gain weight. Fruit is naturally high in sugar and calories, but also very nutritious. You should try to choose dense fruit like banana's pears, apples and pineapple over watery fruits like oranges, berries and watermelon.

Between meals, high energy, high fat drinks can be drunk to increase weight gain. Don't have them at meal times, because then you will be too full to eat a proper meal!

### Cooking Tips:

You should add a generous amount of oil to your cooking to help you gain weight. The good oils to cook with to gain weight are unrefined oils such as olive, coconut, canola or palm.

Eat more protein. A lack of protein in your diet can lead to the loss of lean body mass, even if you are consuming excess foods. This means that you won't gain weight healthily or sustainably. Eat soybeans, peanuts, steak, chicken, tuna. Ask for extra meat on your Banh Mi, or in your Pho Bo. Include a protein source at every meal – red meat, chicken, fish and seafood, nuts, eggs, dairy products, legumes and tofu. Remember serving sizes as well.

#### HIGH FAT DRINKS:

*Sweet Soya Milk* – soya milk, 1 large spoon condensed milk, 2 large spoons milk powder

*Yoghurt shake* – soya milk, 1 tub yoghurt.

*Banana Shake* – soya milk, 1 large spoon condensed milk, 1 mashed banana,

*High fat Soya* – soya milk, 1 large spoon oil, 1 spoon sugar

*Fruit shake* – blended fruit, condensed milk,

*Chocolate shake* – soya milk, 2 big spoons milo/chocolate powder

*Fruit Juice* – 100% fruit juice is another good way to get more calories. Adding sugar or honey increases the amount of calories

*Nutrition Drinks* – there are some commercially available high calorie, high protein powders that can be made into drinks, like "Ensure"

\*You can also add honey to any of the drinks above, or use cows milk if that is what you prefer to drink.\*

It's important to eat a wide variety of foods from each of the food groups (fruit, vegetables and legumes, breads, cereals, rice, pasta and noodles, meat, poultry, fish, eggs, nuts and dairy foods).

To gain weight it is important to snack in between meals. Try to eat every 2-3 hours. You can have a high energy drink instead of a snack. This will ensure that a consistent level is maintained and your body gets the necessary supplements without a break. **NEVER EVER SKIP MEALS!** If you can't eat 3 big meals, eat several small meals and snacks throughout the day.

Eat right before bed. A lot of our healing, repair and regeneration takes place while we sleep. It's like rush hour for building muscle and lean tissue, so eating a healthy snack right before bed ensures a fresh supply of nutrients and calories that are available to "go to work" inside the body.

#### Best snacks to eat to gain weight:

1. Nuts and seeds
2. Whole fat dairy (yoghurt, glass of milk/soy milk)
3. Fruit and vegetables
4. Sweet potato cake
5. Fried banana cake
6. Che
7. Bread
8. Chocolate
9. High Fat Drinks

