

Tips to Increase the Calories in Your Diet

You may need more calories in your diet to help you heal from an illness, surgery or wound. Extra calories can also help you gain weight. Here are some ideas for adding high-calorie foods to your meals.

Butter, margarine and oil

- Add to cream soups, sauces and gravies.
- Use in hot cereals, rice, noodles, potatoes and cooked vegetables.
- Mix with herbs and seasonings, then add to cooked meat, hamburger, fish and egg dishes.
- Melt and use as a dip for breads and seafood (shrimp, scallops, crab and lobster).
- Spread butter or margarine on bread, then add sandwich spread or peanut butter.

Whipped cream, half-and-half and whole milk

- Mix into cereals, mashed potatoes, pasta, rice and egg dishes.
- Use to make sauces, cream soups, batters, puddings, custards, milk shakes and hot chocolate (with marshmallows).
- Use sweetened whipped cream on hot chocolate, gelatin desserts, fruits, puddings, pancakes and waffles.
- Mix unsweetened whipped cream with mashed potatoes or vegetable purees.

Cream cheese

- Spread on muffins, bagels, breads, crackers and fruit slices.
- Roll into balls and coat with granola, wheat germ or chopped nuts.
- Mix with vegetables.

Sour cream

- Use as a topping for baked potatoes, muffins, cakes, fruits, breads and gelatin desserts.
- Add to soups, chili, macaroni and cheese, potatoes and vegetables.
- Use as a dip for fresh fruits and vegetables.

Salad dressings and mayonnaise

- Add to fish, meats, vegetable salads, egg salads and baked potatoes.
- Spread on crackers or sandwiches.
- Use as a dip for vegetables, pizza crusts, breads and chicken fingers.

Honey, jam, syrup and sugar

- Add to breads, cereals, milk drinks, ice cream, yogurt and fruit desserts.
- Use as a glaze for meats.

Granola and wheat germ

- Mix with dried fruits and nuts for a snack.
- Add to vegetables, yogurt, ice cream, fruits, cereals, custards and puddings.
- Use in pudding recipes in place of rice or bread.
- Use in breads, muffins and cookie batter.

Dried fruits

Note: Avoid in children under age 3.

- Bake in turnovers and pies.
- Mix with granola or nuts for a snack.
- Add to stuffing, cookies, muffins, breads, cakes, rice and grain dishes, puddings and cereals.
- Combine with cooked vegetables such as yams, sweet potatoes, carrots and squash.

Nuts and seeds

Note: Avoid in children under age 3.

- Use in casseroles, breads, muffins, pancakes, cookies and waffles.
- Sprinkle on fruits, cereals, ice cream, yogurt, vegetables and salads.
- Mix with raisins, dried fruits and chocolate chips for a snack.

Nut butters

Note: Avoid in children under age 3.

- Spread on sandwiches, toast, muffins, crackers, waffles, pancakes and fruit slices.
- Use as a dip for raw vegetables.
- Blend with milk shakes and nutrition drinks.
- Swirl through ice cream or yogurt.
- Mix into hot cereals.

Ice cream and frozen yogurt

- Add to carbonated (fizzy) drinks such as ginger ale or root beer.
- Blend with milk drinks for a shake or fruits for a smoothie.
- Add to cereals, fruits, gelatin desserts and pies.
- Sandwich between cookies, graham crackers or cake slices.
- Scoop on top of waffles or pancakes.

Nutrition supplements (nutrition bars, drinks and powders)

- Add powders to milk drinks and desserts.
- Mix with ice cream, milk and fruit for a high-protein milk shake.

Children under age 3 should avoid seeds, nuts, nut butters and hard pieces of fruit.