

How to gain weight by really trying

It seems ironic in this day and age when so many people are concerned about obesity and overweight children to discuss how to help children gain weight. But children do have to gain an appropriate amount of weight to grow and develop normally. If a child does not gain around 5 pounds a year, growth may be affected. Inadequate nutrition can occur for several reasons. Medication may diminish appetite; physical or emotional illness can alter appetite and an extremely picky eater can also have a decreased appetite. Decreased intake of calories may stunt growth and needs to be corrected.

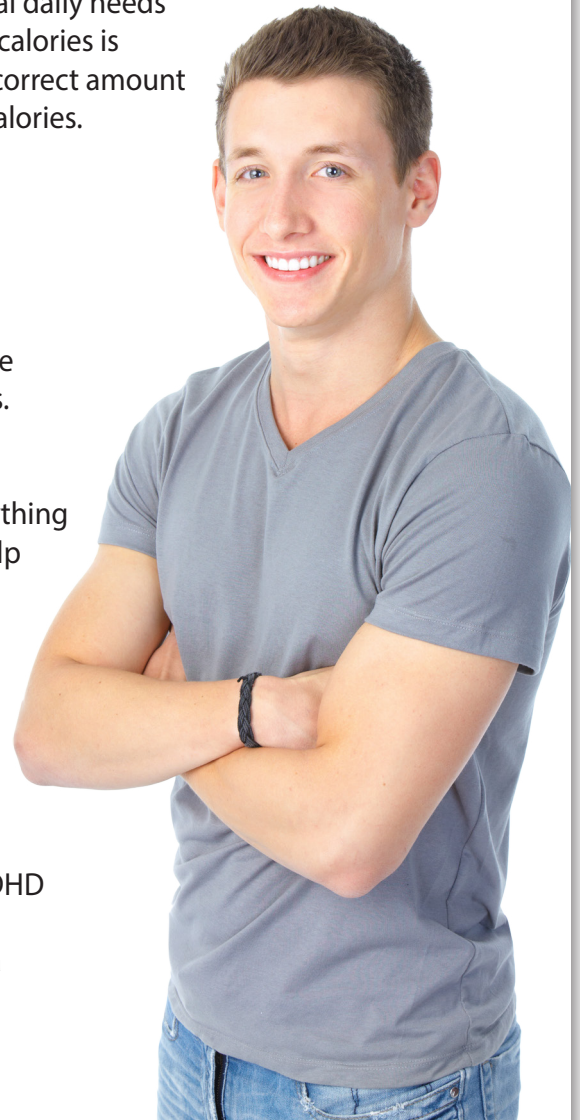
For a person who is underweight, it is just as difficult to gain weight as it is for a person that is overweight to go on a diet and lose weight. The basic principals are the same, just in reverse. There must be a consistent conscientious effort.

The goal of a high calorie diet is to provide energy in excess of normal daily needs so there will be weight gain and ultimately more growth. Increasing calories is different from encouraging basic good nutrition which is about the correct amount of vitamins and minerals, in addition to the appropriate amount of calories. Vitamins do not contain calories and taking vitamins will not help a person gain weight.

Without an increase in appetite, it is nearly impossible to be able to eat a larger amount on a consistent basis. To gain weight, calories have to be "packed" into the current dietary intake with foods that are calorie dense in that they have more calories per volume than others. Fats are more calorie dense than carbohydrates and proteins. So increasing the fat intake in the diet can greatly increase calories. Everything eaten should have the calories increased! Do not buy anything with "low fat" or "low calorie" on the label if you are attempting to help your child gain weight!

You cannot make a child eat more by saying things like "take four more bites" or "you cannot watch TV unless you eat more." These types of statements tend to increase power struggles. Eating more when a person "feels full" is very hard to do.

A child who takes a morning medication that affects appetite like ADHD medicines will have the appetite return in the evening when the medication wears off. In this instance, it is important to not stick to a strict "eat only at mealtime" schedule. Calorie dense bedtime snacks (like peanut butter, ice cream, or cheese) can be very appropriate.



Diet supplements

You can gain a pound by increasing your diet by approximately 3,500 calories. Therefore, an increase of 150 calories a day will result in the addition of about 1 pound a month. Calories can be easily added to a diet, often with ingredients that are already in the home. Rarely are special commercial dietary supplements necessary.

Remember, these calories need to be in addition to what is normally eaten. The majority of these foods are higher in fat because they contain more calories per volume. When a person is underweight, the concern about increasing cholesterol is minimal.

The following list will help you add extra calories your child's regular diet. These items can usually be hidden within the meal so the actual volume eaten does not have to be increased. Use at least one of the food items every single day. Make slow steady progress!

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| 1 tablespoon of butter can add 100 calories | 1 package of instant breakfast is 130 calories |
| 1 cup of vanilla ice cream is 260 calories | 1 scoop of whey powder is 120 calories |
| 1 tablespoon of mayonnaise is 60 calories | 1 cup of whole milk is 150 calories |
| 1 tablespoon of peanut butter is 100 calories | (1 cup of skim milk is only 90 calories) |
| 1 egg adds an additional 75 calories | 1 cup of 2% milk is 120 calories |

Suggestions for high calorie milkshakes

Peanut Butter Cup Shake

480 calories, 16 g protein, 28 g fat

- ½ cup whole milk
- 2 tsp peanut butter
- 2 tsp chocolate syrup
- ½ cup vanilla ice cream

Instant Breakfast Shake

550 calories, 20 g protein, 27 g fat

- 1 cup whole milk
- 1 package instant breakfast
- 1 tsp flavored syrup
- 1 cup ice

Power Chocolate Shake

655 calories, 24 g protein, 28 g fat

- ¾ cup whole milk
- ¼ cup half n half
- ¼ cup skim milk powder
- 2 tsp chocolate syrup
- ½ cup vanilla ice cream
- ½ cup chocolate ice cream

Super Strawberry Shake

635 calories, 24 g protein, 27 g fat

- ¾ cup whole milk
- ¼ cup half n half
- ¼ cup skim milk powder
- ¼ cup strawberries
- 1 cup strawberry ice cream

Blaster

450 calories, 9 g protein, 27 g fat

- ¼ cup whole milk
- ¼ cup half n half
- 1 chocolate chip cookie
- 1 cup ice