

Ways to Help a Child Who is Underweight*

You can help your child gain weight by adding extra calories and protein into your child's favorite foods. Here are a few suggestions:

- Use evaporated milk in recipes for pudding, hot cocoa, milk shakes, oatmeal, mashed potatoes, or cream soups.
- Add powdered milk to yogurt, gravy, mashed potatoes, oatmeal, or in recipes for muffins, cakes, and cookies where it calls for water.
- Add grated cheese to rice, vegetables, pasta, or eggs.
- Chop nuts finely and add them to oatmeal, vegetables, or ice cream.
- Add eggs to casseroles before baking or add cooked eggs to mixed dishes.
- Spread nut butter on toast or pancakes or add it to muffin recipes.
- Add small pieces of cooked meat, fish, chicken, turkey, tofu, or hard-cooked eggs to canned soup or salads.
- Dip fresh fruit in nut butter spread.

You can easily add the foods listed below to other foods. This adds calories without increasing the amount of food, which is important for children with small appetites. Adding small amounts of higher fat foods may help some children gain needed weight:

HIGH CALORIE FOODS:

- Cooking Oil
- Mayonnaise
- Cream Sauce
- Salad Dressing
- Gravy
- Dips
- Sour Cream
- Cream Cheese
- Butter; Margarine

HIGH CALORIE, HIGH NUTRIENT FOODS:

- Dry Milk
- Instant Breakfast Drink
- Cheese; Cheese Sauce
- Raisins; Other dried fruit
- Wheat Germ

High Calorie Food choices for children who need to gain weight*

All Children need foods from each food group every day. Children who need to gain weight should eat the foods listed below. These foods are highest in calories and nutrients:

MILK, YOGURT, & CHEESE:

- Whole Milk
- Chocolate Milk
- Yogurt made with whole milk
- Cottage cheese made with whole milk
- Egg Nog
- Pudding; Custard
- Milk Shakes
- Whole Milk Cheeses (cheddar, swiss, jack)

VEGETABLES:

- Cooked Carrots
- Broccoli
- Any other fresh or frozen vegetable
- Peas, Corn, Potatoes
- Fried or Creamed Vegetables

BREAD, CEREAL, RICE & PASTA:

- Bread
- Tortillas (Flour)
- Fried Rice
- Noodles: Buttered
- Hot Cereals
- Sweetened Cereals
- Pancakes, Waffles, French Toast
- Muffins, Biscuits

MEAT, POULTRY, FISH, BEANS, EGGS, & NUTS:

- Beef, Pork, Lamb, Chicken thigh, Fish, Shrimp
- Sausage
- Fried meats
- Cooked Beans
- Refried Beans
- Nut butter (Peanut, Almond, Seed)
- Fried Tofu

FRUITS:

- Banana, Apple, Orange
- Any other fresh or frozen fruit
- Fruit juice
- Canned Fruit; Dried Fruit
- Avocado

SWEETS, FATS, & COMINATION FOODS:

- Ice Cream, Pie, Cake
- Donuts, Cookies
- Bacon, Olives
- Butter, Margarine
- Oils, Salad Dressings, Mayonnaise
- Pizza
- Spaghetti with Meat
- Hamburger, Cheeseburger
- Quesadilla, Enchilada, Tamale
- Coconut Milk, Coconut