

Weight Gain Tips

- **Eat regularly throughout the day.** More eating opportunities can help with getting in more calories and nutrition without feeling too full. Try eating every 2-3 hours.
- **Set alarms for eating.** If you find you sometimes forget to eat, set an alarm, or put eating times into your calendar or planner to help with eating regularly.
- **Include snacks.** Eat 2-4 snacks every day in between meals.
- **Snack at night.** Eat a bedtime snack such as a bowl of cereal with milk, turkey sandwich or peanut butter and toast.
- **Plan ahead.** Plan daily or weekly menus, have snacks ready and make plans for meals.
- **Bring food along.** Pack meals and snacks when you know you will be out. Try packing a “backup” snack like a protein bar or trail mix just in case you are away from food longer than planned.
- **Limit fluids before and with meals.** Too many fluids before meals can lower your appetite, instead choose some fluids with meals and have more after meals if you are still thirsty.
- **Choose nutritious beverages.** Try replacing water with liquids that supply calories and energy. Have milk, chocolate milk, juice or smoothies with meals.
- **Include desserts, sweets or treats.** Ice cream after meals provides calories and protein!
- **Add condiments or ‘extras’ whenever you can.** Top your food with dried fruit, chopped nuts, seeds, honey, bacon bits, cheeses, mayonnaise, and salad dressings. Prepare your food with oils, margarine, butter, dressing or sour cream. Try adding hummus, cream cheese, or avocado to sandwiches or crackers/veggies.
- **Skip low fat dairy products.** Swap out low fat and skim dairy products for whole milk yogurt, 2% or whole milk, and full fat cheeses.
- **Include fats.** Add sources of dietary fats to your meals, try nuts, nut butters, avocado, guacamole, butter, sour cream and salad dressing.
- **Ditch diet foods.** Skip foods marketed as low fat, low sugar or low calorie, these foods can fill you up, leaving less room for more nutrient- and energy-dense foods.
- **Eat fiber in moderation.** Everyone needs fiber, but too much can lead to excessive fullness and bloating. Eat some, but not too many beans, salads and vegetables and limit bars or products marketed as high in fiber.
- **Consider a calorie/protein supplement.** A nutritional supplement (e.g. bar or shake) may help provide extra calories and protein. Try protein bars like Cliff Builder or shakes like Ensure or Boost.
- **Supplement with a “Weight-Gainer” product?** Discuss if a “weight-gainer” nutrition supplement powder is appropriate for you with your dietitian or medical provider.