

# Tips for Healthy Weight Gain

It sounds strange to some people to hear of anyone who wants/needs to gain weight but it is a reasonable for people. They have fast a metabolism, good genetics or may be extreme fidgeters who can burn 700 cal/calories. It would be to simple to say 'just eating more.' You need to know basic nutrition well enough so that food has value and weight gained is muscle not fat. Food will become fuel rather than just a way to fight off hunger.

## Basic nutrition

The USDA established guidelines for healthy eating. These are the six categories plus serving amounts plus what is a serving size:

Carbohydrates	grains and pasta	11-13 servings	½ cup pasta or rice 1 slice bread
Fruits	dried, juices, fresh	4-6	1 piece fruit 8oz juice
Vegetables	raw or cooked	5-7	1cup raw or ½ cup cooked
Dairy	low-fat milk, cheeses	2-4	1cup milk 2oz. cheese
Lean meats, nuts, peanut		3-4	3oz. meat

USDA Recommends daily 3500 calories per day for active individuals

Protein	90 - 100 gm
Carbs	641 gm
Fat	78 gm

Nutrition breakdown – all food is broken into one of these categories. The importance of each type plus food examples follows;

**Proteins** - 4 calories per gram. Protein is responsible for building and repairing tissue, healthy skin and bones. Protein aids in the strengthening of red blood cells which carry oxygen to the muscles. Protein is an important recovery aid if eaten with in 30min of a hard or long run by increasing the rebuilding process of damaged tissues.

Examples: (grams) chicken breast 26.5, tuna 3oz = 22, lean beef 3oz = 21.2, cottage cheese ½ cup = 14, yogurt low fat 1c = 11.9, tofu 1/2c = 11.0, milk 1c = 8.0, egg (white) = 6.0

**Carbohydrates** - 4 calories per gram. Carbohydrates are the primary fuel for the body by providing glucose. It also replenishes glycogen stores in the muscle cells. There are two types simple (sugar) and complex (starches). The simple cabs are quick energy therefore complex are the best for the sustaining of energy.

Examples: (grams) potato w/ skin = 51, rice brown 1c = 44.8, pasta 1c = 36.4, banana 26.7, pancakes 3=24, apple = 20.6, oatmeal 2/3c 18.6, honey 1T 17.3, milk c = 12, slice bread = 11.4, broccoli 1/2c = 4

**Fat** - 9 calories per gram. Fats are a concentrated energy store but the body burns carbs, protein and the fats. They have a vital rule in the storage and transporting of vitamins. Fats are readily available so you do not need to purposefully eat fat. Avoid highly saturated foods i.e. Animal fats.

Examples: (grams) almonds 1oz = 14.6, ribs 3.5oz = 13.8, mayo 1T = 11, cheese 1oz = 9.4, milk (whole) 1c = 8, avocado ¼ med = 7.5, chicken breast no skin 3.5oz = 3.1

## Quick tips

- Eat calorically dense foods. Some foods while similar have greatly different calorie content.
- Drink juice instead of water: OJ 110 cal while cran-apple 170 cal and grape juice
- Corn has 140 cal/cup while green beans have 40/cup
- Granola has 700 cal/cup and Cheerios 100/cup
- Dried fruit has more calories than whole fruit
- Bigger portions – ‘Super size’
- Two potatoes instead of one
- Extra chicken breast with pasta
- Bigger bowl of cereal with low-fat milk and fruit
- Add protein powders to milk, juices and/or foods (Met-Rx; Whey Protein – look for powders with no sugar added)
- Extra piece of cheese/meats on sandwiches
- Lots of PB with jelly or honey on a whole wheat bagel
- Lift weights
- Hit the basic areas; shoulders (pull-ups, dips), chest (push-ups), abs (crunches), legs (lunges) – *Theses can be done without weights*
- 3 sets of 10-15
- Don't skip meals
- Eat regularly. Bring Power Bars, Cliff Bars etc... for between meals. Also drink a carbo drink (Gatorade etc...). Instant Breakfast mixed with low-fat milk is also an excellent between meal choices.
- Avoid sugar: Sugary foods are a high calorie food but with little nutritional value. Watch out for juices that are labeled a ‘fruit drink or punch’ this means that there is little juice (10%) but a lot of sugar. Some juices have more than a sugar soft drink.

By following a set plan you can achieve the desired type of weight (muscle) gain. Just be aware of food types and make the best choices.

## Works Cited

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