

Eating Guidelines for Increasing Your Energy and Protein Intake

This fact sheet provides tips on how you can get more energy (calories) and protein in your diet.

Choosing foods high in energy and protein will help you to:

- recover faster from surgery or illness
- build muscle
- gain weight or
- prevent further weight loss.

If you have heart disease or diabetes, adding extra carbohydrate (sugar) or certain types of fat, may not be a good choice. Talk to a dietitian who can help you decide which high energy foods are best for you.



Steps you can take

During the day, aim to have a meal or snack every two to three hours. Include a snack before you go to bed.

Some fluids, such as 3.25% homogenized whole milk and milkshakes, can be a quick way to get lots energy and protein, but they can be filling. Plan to drink fluids at the end of your meal or snack.

If you find you have a small appetite, make every bite count. Eating half a meal or drinking only part of a beverage is still better than having nothing. Small high energy and protein meals or snacks include:

cheese or peanut butter and crackers

bagel with cream cheese or melted cheese
 half a sandwich - egg, tuna or salmon, meat or peanut butter
 with jam or honey
 vegetables with dip
 yogurt (more than 2% MF) with granola and dried fruit
 cereal with milk
 milkshakes and smoothies.

Check your weight weekly. If your weight is staying the same or you are gaining weight, you will know that you are getting enough energy.

Drink juice, milk, milkshakes or yogurt beverages instead of low energy fluids like water, broth, tea or coffee or diet beverages.

Have ready-to-eat snacks on hand such as pudding, yogurt, granola bars, protein bars, nuts, seeds or combined in a trail mix, cheese and crackers and even some meal leftovers.

Avoid reduced-sugar and reduced-fat foods and beverages such as foods labelled "light", "low fat", "fat free" or "sugar-free".

Use [Canada's Food Guide](#) to plan higher energy and protein meals and snacks and to eat a variety of foods for good health.

Include the high energy and high protein foods from the table below into your meals and snacks as often as you can.

The Meat & Alternatives and Milk & Alternatives food groups in the table below provide excellent sources of protein.

Refer to Additional Resources below to get a copy of the Food Guide.

High Protein Choices	Food Sources	Add Foods to Other Foods
Meat & Alternatives	Meat Poultry Fish, including fatty fish	Add chopped or ground meat, poultry, fish and tofu to:

	<p>such as salmon, trout, mackerel Tofu Eggs Legumes (peas, beans and lentils) Nuts and seeds and their butters Peanuts and peanut butter</p> <p>Note: Nuts and seeds, nuts and seed butters, peanuts and peanut butter are also high in energy.</p>	<p>Pasta Casseroles Stir-frys Omelettes Soups Stews Chili.</p> <p>Add hard boiled eggs and lentils to: Salads Soups Pasta Casseroles Sandwiches.</p> <p>Add nuts and seeds (chopped, ground) or nut butters to: Ice milk or ice cream Yogurt Pudding Cereal Baked goods Slices of fruit.</p>
Milk & Alternatives	Cheese Whole milk	Melt or grate cheese on:

<p>Choose products with more than 2% MF for more energy</p>	<p>Chocolate milk Milk powder Soy beverage Yogurt, including Greek varieties Custard and pudding made with whole milk</p>	<p>Potatoes Casseroles Crackers Vegetables Sandwiches.</p> <p>Add milk powder - 30-60 mL (2-4 Tbsp) to:</p> <p>Whole milk Cereal Eggs Hot chocolate Milkshakes Smoothies Yogurt Mashed potatoes Sauces Gravies Casseroles Baked goods.</p>
<p>High Calorie Choices</p>		
<p>Milk & Alternatives Choose products with more than 2% MF for more energy</p>	<p>Hot chocolate Sour cream Ice milk or ice cream Frozen yogurt</p>	<p>Add sour cream to baked potatoes.</p> <p>Use sour cream instead of milk when making cake.</p> <p>Add syrup and jam sauce to ice milk or ice</p>

		cream.
Grain Products	<p>All types of bread, rolls and buns</p> <p>English muffins</p> <p>Bagels</p> <p>Pancakes, waffles</p> <p>Croissants</p> <p>Tortilla shells</p> <p>Cereal</p> <p>Pasta</p> <p>Rice</p> <p>Quinoa, and other grains</p>	<p>French toast, pancakes or waffles with added syrup, non-hydrogenated margarine or butter.</p> <p>Add peanut or nut butters to pancakes.</p> <p>Pasta with cheese or Alfredo sauce.</p> <p>Add oatmeal to meatloaf and meatballs.</p>
Vegetables and Fruit	<p>Dried Fruit</p> <p>Avocado</p> <p>Olives</p> <p>Potatoes, yams and squash</p>	<p>Add dried fruit to cereal, desserts, cookies.</p> <p>Add avocados and olives to salads, sandwiches and pizza.</p> <p>Fruit can be made into crisps or cobblers topped with ice milk or ice cream.</p> <p>Have vegetables with a dip, salad dressing or hummus.</p>
Others	<p>Gravy, sauces</p> <p>Fats: non-hydrogenated margarine, oil, butter</p>	<p>Add gravies, sauces, fats, dressings and sugars to:</p> <p>Potatoes</p>

	<p>Salad dressings and mayonnaise</p> <p>Sugars: jam, jelly, syrups, molasses, honey, sugar</p> <p>Baked goods such as homemade muffins and cookies (healthier varieties are oatmeal, peanut butter and fig and date filled cookies)</p>	<p>Hot cereal</p> <p>Rice</p> <p>Pasta</p> <p>Other cooked grains</p> <p>Vegetables</p> <p>Eggs</p> <p>Toast</p> <p>Or when preparing foods.</p>
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Tips on how to add extra energy and protein to your meals and snacks:

Meal and Snack Ideas	Ways to Add More Energy	Ways to Add More Protein
Breakfast		
Hard-boiled egg		
Slice of toast with margarine or butter	Jam or honey on toast.	Hazelnut or other nut butters on toast.
Glass of 100% juice		
Lunch		
Tuna sandwich	<p>Mix tuna with mayonnaise.</p> <p>Add non-hydrogenated margarine or butter to bread.</p>	

	Add avocado slice	
Bowl of mushroom soup	Crackers or cheese with soup.	Add milk powder - 30-60 mL (2-4 Tbsp) to soup. Make soup with whole milk (3.3% MF).
Piece of fruit		
Supper		
Chicken thigh Mashed potatoes	Add non-hydrogenated margarine or butter or sour cream on potatoes.	Eat two chicken thighs.
Broccoli	Homemade cheese sauce on broccoli.	
Small salad	Salad dressing, nuts and seeds to your salad.	
Ice milk or ice cream	Syrup on ice milk or ice cream.	Add 30 mL (2 tbsp) of nuts to ice milk.
Snacks		
Half a bagel	Cream cheese, non-hydrogenated margarine or butter.	Add peanut or nut butters or cheese (i.e. Cheddar).
Yogurt	Choose sweetened high fat yogurt (more than 2% MF) with dried fruit and granola.	Add milk powder 30-60 mL (2-4 Tbsp).

Milkshake	Use whole milk (3.3% MF). Add syrup, nuts or seeds.	Add milk powder - 30-60 mL (2-4 Tbsp) or peanut butter.
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Special Considerations

Eating with people can make meal times more pleasant which can increase your appetite and intake.

If you are tired:

Ask friends and family members to help you make meals.

Buy ready-made meals from the grocery store or a meal delivery service to have on hand.

Make double recipes when you are feeling well. Freeze the extra and use when you don't feel like cooking.

For heart smart options, choose foods with less saturated fat such as 2% or less fat milk and alternatives, lean meats and poultry without the skin. Make sauces and gravies with less fat and choose unsaturated fats such as canola, sunflower and olive oil and soft non-hydrogenated margarine.

If you are not able to get enough energy from food, drink a liquid nutritional supplement in between meals. You can find these in the pharmacy or pharmacy section of your grocery store or you can make your own. See recipe below.

Recipes

Try these energy and protein rich recipes from *Great Food Fast* - Dietitians of Canada, 2000.

You can make these recipes higher in energy and protein by following some examples in the tables above, such as adding lentils to soup; milk powder to milk and to cereal; and dried nuts and fruit to yogurt.

Trail Mix

Makes about 10 - 75 mL (1/3 cup) servings.

125 mL	Pumpkin seeds	1/2 cup
125 mL	Sunflower seeds	1/2 cup
250 mL	Raisins	1 cup
175 mL	Whole peanuts	3/4 cup
125-175 mL	Shredded coconut, toasted	1/2-3/4 cup
175 mL	Optional: chocolate chips	3/4 cup

Mix all ingredients together. Store in a tightly covered container.
 Eat plain or serve over ice milk, ice cream or frozen yogurt.
 Try substituting your favourite nuts: walnuts, cashews, almonds, brazil or pine nuts.
 Try adding your favourite chopped dried fruit: apricot, apple, pear or pineapple.

Baked Chicken and Potato Dinner

Serves 4

4	Bone-in chicken breasts	4
2	Medium potatoes, cubed	2
250 mL	Bell peppers, cubed	1 cup
1	Medium onion, cut into 8 pieces	1
30 mL	Olive oil	2 Tbsp
5 mL	Garlic powder	1 tsp
5 mL	Paprika	1 tsp
60 mL	Grated parmesan cheese	1/4 cup

Pat chicken breast dry with paper towel.
 Place one breast in each corner of a baking dish.
 Put potatoes, pepper and onion in center of dish.
 Drizzle olive oil over chicken and vegetables. Sprinkle with garlic powder, paprika and cheese.
 Bake in preheated 200°C (400°F) oven for 20 minutes, stirring vegetables once halfway through cooking time.
 Bake for an additional 20-30 minutes or until juices run clear when chicken is pierced with a fork and vegetables are tender.

Sunny Orange Shake

Serves 1. Makes 300 mL (1¼ cups).

175 mL	Vanilla-flavoured yogurt (more than	¾ cup
30 mL	2% MF)	1
125	Skim-milk powder	Tbsp
mL	100% pure orange juice	½ cup

In a blender or bowl combine yogurt, skim milk powder and orange juice.

Blend or whisk until smooth.

You can add a different type of juice and even fresh or canned fruit and then blenderize.



Additional Resources

Canada's Food Guide

<http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fn-an/food-guide-aliment/index-eng.php>

These resources are provided as sources of additional information believed to be reliable and accurate at the time of publication and should not be considered an endorsement of any information, service, product or company.



Notes

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