

# High Calorie Diet

A high calorie diet is used for children with high energy needs, unwanted weight loss, or difficulty maintaining/gaining weight. This diet focuses on regularly offering high-calorie foods/beverages as part of a balanced diet. Some children need to follow a high calorie diet for long periods of time, but many children need a high calorie diet only for a few weeks. Your child's treatment team can help determine how long the high calorie diet is needed.

## Foods Recommended on High Calorie Diet

### Meat and Alternative Proteins

#### Meat, fish, poultry, or tofu

- fry/sauté in butter or oil rather than bake/broil/BBQ
- cook in a coating, such as bread crumbs or crushed: nuts, crackers, potato chips, or cereal. Try dipping in egg first, then coating and frying.
- add sauce or gravy
- add to casseroles, salads, soups, pastas or rice dishes
- dip chicken strips or fish sticks in creamy salad dressing
- tuna mixed with mayonnaise: in salad or sandwich

#### Cooked eggs

- add butter/oil, can also top with cheese
- hardboiled egg: add to salads or mix with mayonnaise for an egg salad sandwich
- mix into dishes such as mashed potato, sauces, ground beef or pureed foods

#### Nut butters (peanut, almond, etc.) or sunflower seed butter

- use as dip for fruit, crackers, celery or other vegetables
- spread on sandwiches, pancakes, muffins, etc.
- blend into yogurt, pudding, milkshakes

Healthy tip: look for nut butters that are free of hydrogenated oils

#### Nuts

CAUTION: nuts can be a choking hazard for toddlers or young children

- as snacks alone or in trail mix
- add to pancake, waffle, cookie, muffin, or bread recipes
- sprinkle on fruit, yogurt, cereal, granola, ice cream, salads
- use crushed nuts in place of breadcrumbs in recipes

### Starches and Grains

#### Oatmeal, cream of wheat, grits

- make with whole milk, half & half or cream instead of water
- melt butter into the cereal

#### Granola or cold cereal

- serve in cream, half & half, or whole milk

#### Wheat germ

- add to bread, muffin, or pancake recipes
- sprinkle on fruit, ice cream, yogurt, or toast

# High Calorie Diet

## Foods Recommended on High Calorie Diet

### Mashed potatoes, rice, noodles, pasta

- add one or more of the following after cooking: butter, margarine, oil (olive, canola, and coconut are healthy choices), cheese, cooked egg, or cream
- add oil to pasta *after* draining (this can also help limit additional calories served to other family members as some can be served without oil)

### Toast, bagels, English muffins

- spread butter on when hot to allow more butter to soak in
- add a layer of butter before adding other toppings such as peanut butter, cream cheese, honey, fruit spread

Healthy Tip: look for bread products that are 100% whole grain

### Sandwiches

- include one or more of the following spreads: butter, margarine, oil, full-fat dressing, full-fat mayonnaise, peanut butter or other nut butter, guacamole, hummus, cheese, cream cheese
- butter all four sides of bread on grilled sandwiches

## Milk and Dairy Alternatives

### Yogurt

- choose yogurt made with whole milk or 2% (instead of 1% or non-fat)
- Greek versions are a healthy choice as they have more protein than regular yogurt
- mix-ins: dry oats, chopped nuts, crushed cookies, high calorie cereals (such as granola, shredded wheat, bran, grape nuts)

### Powdered milk

- add to regular milk when a recipe calls for milk
- mix into liquids when cooking such as with eggs, soups, gravies, ground meat, casseroles, desserts, pudding, custards, muffins, hot cereals

### Instant breakfast powder

- example: "Carnation Breakfast Essentials" which is found in the breakfast aisle
- add to yogurt, pudding, custard, or whole milk

### Cheeses

- alone, on crackers or sandwiches, with fruit, etc.

### Cream cheese

- spread on sandwiches, fruits slices, crackers, breads, or muffins
- rolled into balls and coated with chopped nuts, wheat germ, or granola

### Whipped cream

- on pancakes, waffles, fruit, desserts, etc.

\*Note that this is a general list and does not account for your child's specific food allergies/intolerances.

## High Calorie Diet

### Try the following:

- **Avoid low calorie meals/snacks** such as gelatin, juice, broth, plain dry cereal, plain crackers, plain pasta/rice. If offering these foods, combine them with high calorie items listed above.
- **Nutrition supplement drinks** provide calories, protein, vitamins and minerals. They can be especially helpful when your child is skipping meals, as he/she may be better able to drink a supplement when not eating much. Examples are Boost or Ensure, Pediasure, Carnation Breakfast Essentials, etc.
- If your child does not drink regular cow's milk, **try a flavored milk, alternative milk, or shake.** See chart below to compare estimated milk content (calories may vary depending on brand).

Milk (8 oz.)	Calories	Protein (grams)
Whole Milk	150	8
2% Milk	130	8
1% Milk	110	8.5
Non-fat Milk	90	9
Soy, Original	90	6
Coconut, Original	80	< 1
Almond, Original	60	1
Almond, Unsweetened	30-40	1

\*Note that this is a general list and does not account for your child's specific food allergies/intolerances.

## High Calorie Diet

- **Fruits and vegetables should still be consumed daily** since they contain important vitamins, minerals, and fiber. Fruits and vegetables are naturally low in calories so when offering, combine them with high calorie items above or some examples below.

### Include Fruits and Vegetables

- Vegetables in a cheesy omelet (bell peppers, mushrooms, olives, tomatoes, etc.)
- Favorite vegetables dipped in creamy salad dressing or hummus
- Cooked vegetables: sauté in oil or butter rather than plain steamed vegetables
- Gravy/sauce atop vegetables such as mushrooms, green beans, etc.
- Artichoke/spinach dip on crackers, chips, or raw vegetables
- Avocado: has higher calories than most fruits/vegetables since it contains “healthy” fat
  - serve alone or mashed as a dip, spread on sandwiches, mix into blended dishes, or add to smoothies
- Dried fruits
  - add to cookies, muffins, breads
  - use as topping for yogurt, pudding, ice cream
- Fruit/vegetables blended in high calorie milkshake, smoothie, or nutrition supplement drink
- Banana rolled in chopped nuts, or both yogurt and nuts
- Fruit with cream cheese dip or in heavy cream
- Fresh/frozen fruit atop high calorie granola/cereal/oatmeal
- Fruit baked into a pie and served with whipped cream or ice cream

\*Note that this is a general list and does not account for your child's specific food allergies/intolerances.

### More Information

Go to <http://www.calorieking.com/> to search for calorie content of specific food/drinks.

This handout was provided to assist you with your child's nutritional needs. All nutrition plans should be individualized by working with a registered dietitian. Please get a referral for “Nutrition Clinic” from your Primary Care Provider. Then call (858) 576-1700 ext. 5999 to book an appointment with a dietitian.