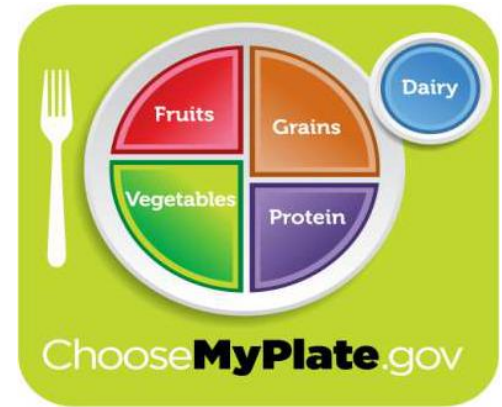


High Calorie Diet

Your child's doctor or dietitian recommends a diet high in calories. Calories are the energy provided by food. Some children need more calories to help them grow well and gain weight at the right pace. This sheet will help get more calories in your child's diet to help them gain weight.

Eating from all food groups is important no matter what diet you are following. However, it can be difficult to make room for fruits and vegetables when you are on a high calorie diet. Use the ideas on the following pages to make healthy choices from all food groups.



Here are some tips to make this diet work for your child:

- Have three meals and 2 to 3 scheduled snacks every day. Try to have them at about the same time from day to day.
- Avoid “grazing” on crackers, cereal or small snacks. Avoid drinking milk or juice between meals and snacks. This will help your child to be hungry at meal and snack times.
- Have small servings of drinks with meals and snacks. Offer only small amounts of water between meals or snacks. This will help keep your child from filling up on liquid.
- Look at the food in your refrigerator and cupboards. Foods that say “light”, “low-fat”, “fat free” or “diet” do not have as many calories. These foods may not help your child gain weight.
- Give servings that fit the size of your child. Portions that are too large can overwhelm a child. Start small and offer second helpings if your child asks for more.
- Let your child decide when they are finished eating. Most children finish meals in 15 to 20 minutes. Do not force your child to eat or finish portions of food.
- Provide a wide variety of food.
- See teaching sheet [#1127](#) – ABC's of Boosting Calories for more ideas.

Choose these foods to get more calories and protein in your child's diet:

Breakfast:

- Eggs.
- Bacon and Sausage.
- Omelets with ham or bacon.
- Whole milk, soy or coconut yogurt.
- Bagel with cream cheese, butter/margarine or oil.
- Pancakes with butter or margarine and syrup.
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Lunch or Dinner:

- Meats including chicken, turkey, beef, pork and fish.
- Fish sticks, mini corn dogs and chicken strips or nuggets.
- Tacos, quesadillas and nachos with meat and cheese, with extra cheese.
- Pizza, spaghetti and meatballs, pasta with Alfredo sauce, macaroni and cheese.
- Tuna, chicken or egg salad sandwich.
- Hamburger, cheeseburger, veggie burger, chicken sandwich.
- Hot dogs, grilled ham and cheese, grilled cheese or any other grilled sandwich.

Sides:

- Potatoes with butter, margarine and sour cream.
- Refried beans with or without cheese.
- Vegetables with added butter/margarine, cheese sauce or other condiments.
- Raw vegetables with dip, hummus or nut butter.

Desserts:

- Ice cream, ice cream bar.
- Pudding, dirt pudding.
- Apple pie with or without ice cream.
- Fruit with whipped cream or fruit dip.
- Graham crackers or animal crackers with frosting.
- See teaching sheet [#1129](#) – High Calorie Puddings for more ideas.

Drinks:

- Whole milk or chocolate milk; whole milk with added cream, flavored syrup.
- Milkshakes.
- Hot chocolate made with hot whole milk.
- Yogurt smoothie.
- Carnation Breakfast Essentials made with whole milk.
- See teaching sheet [#1904](#) – High Calorie Drinks for more ideas.

Condiments:

- Any kind of butter, margarine or oil.
- Ranch dressing or any other type of salad dressing.
- Sour Cream or mayonnaise.
- Barbeque Sauce or ketchup.
- Nut butters (cashew, almond), peanut butter or sunflower seed butter.
- Honey, jam, jellies and syrups.
- Gravy.
- As needed, allergen-free condiments of any kind.

Use these high calorie combos to create delicious meals:

Make substitutions as needed if your child has food restrictions.

Breakfast

- Scrambled egg with cheese rolled in a tortilla with salsa, add avocado* if you have it.
- Smash avocado* on buttered whole wheat toast, top with scrambled or fried egg.
- Mix granola, whole milk yogurt, fresh berries or fruit.
- Make a breakfast sandwich with a toasted, buttered English muffin, cheesy eggs and bacon or sausage.
- Spread peanut butter or other nut butter on French toast* or French toast sticks, pancakes or waffles; add fruit and syrup.

Lunch and Dinner

- Add chili and shredded cheese or cheese sauce to hot dogs, fries, tator tots or baked potatoes.
- Add bacon and cheese to any sandwich; add a squeeze of mayo, too.
- Top a tossed salad with a crispy chicken strip, cheese, bacon, hard-boiled egg and full fat salad dressing.
- Garnish soups with shredded cheese, goldfish crackers, bacon or popcorn.
- Create a grilled sandwich or Panini – try turkey and avocado*, cheese and apples or a Reuben.*
- Spread refried beans, taco meat, shredded cheese, lettuce, tomato, salsa and sour cream on a tortilla for a yummy burrito.
- Create a meatball sub and top with shredded cheese.
- Enhance mac and cheese or Spaghettios with crumbled bacon, hot dog pieces, ham, taco meat or broccoli.
- Build a taco pizza: Start with cheese pizza, add taco meat or chopped chicken strips, cheese, lettuce, tomato, salsa, sour cream.

Snacks

- Make your own snack mix: Try popcorn and sweetened cereal; cereal and raisins; goldfish and pretzels; peanuts or other nuts*, chocolate coated candies*, cereal squares, yogurt covered raisins* to create trail mix.
- Add chocolate or strawberry syrup to ice cream. Top with animal crackers.
- Make a yogurt parfait with fresh fruit, granola and yogurt.
- Cut a granola bar in half and spread with peanut butter; top with the other half to create a sandwich. Spread peanut butter on a Rice Krispy treat.
- Unroll a fruit roll up, wrap it around string cheese.
- Dip a garlic breadstick into cheese sauce or marinara sauce.
- Dunk a hot pretzel or crunchy pretzels into Ranch dressing or cheese dip.
- Spread peanut butter, nut butter or sunflower seed butter on apple, bananas or any other fruit or veggie.
- Half-sized sandwich with meat, cheese, butter or mayo or PB & J half sandwich.

*Item not typically available through Children's Hospital of Wisconsin room service menu

For more health and wellness information check out this resource:

<https://kidshealth.org/ChildrensWi/en/parents>

This sheet was created to help you care for your child or family member. It does not take the place of medical care. Talk with your healthcare provider for diagnosis, treatment and follow-up.