
Healthy Ways to Gain Weight

For some people, gaining weight can be as difficult as losing weight. There are several myths surrounding gaining weight, but the most dangerous one says that thin people should start to eat high fat foods. Although this does increase calories significantly, it is an unhealthy way to go about gaining weight. High fat foods in excess, especially those composed of animal fats, are unhealthy for everyone regardless of their weight.



Some people are naturally very thin. Being underweight for these people is not a sign of being unhealthy. As long as naturally thin people are eating regular meals and snacks and are maintaining a good energy level they need not try to force themselves to gain weight.

Here are some guidelines to work with:

- Keep a food record for 3 days to assess how much and how often you are eating to begin with. You may find that you eat large meals but then go for long hours between meals, losing out on many opportunities to eat!
- Be especially aware of how much caffeine you may be having throughout the day. Caffeine from coffee, tea and sodas can be acting as an appetite suppressant.
- If you smoke try to quit! Many people smoke instead of eating.
- Try to drink in between meals, instead of with your meals. Drinking can make you feel full sooner, so that you may eat less food during the meal.
- Try to eat every one to two hours in between meals. This means that you need to carry meals and snacks with you throughout the day!

Snacking Tips!!!

Snacking can get tricky! You'll need to experiment with how much you can eat and still have room for a meal. After all, you don't want to eat so many snacks that you start skipping meals! Many foods work well as snacks, don't limit yourself to those listed below.

Dried fruits
Trail mix
Bean spreads with low fat chips
Sweet potatoes



Nuts and Seeds
Low fat granola bars
Fruit juices and nectars
Veggie Chips made with vegetable oil



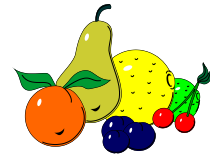
For your convenience, there's a trail mix recipe on the back of this page. Although trail mix makes a great snack, you'll have to experiment with how much your intestinal tract can tolerate - the fiber content is rather high. You might experience bloating or a laxative effect. If you are finding it hard to "chew" all those snacks, drink juices or fruit nectars throughout the day.

Trail Mix Recipe

Ingredients

1/2 cup Almonds
1/2 cup Apples, dried
1/2 cup Apricots, dried
1/4 cup Coconut flakes, shredded
1/2 cup Wheat germ

1/4 cup Dates
2 cups Grape Nuts Cereal
2/3 cup Raisins
1 cup Sunflower seeds



Directions

Mix all the ingredients together. Store in an airtight container, such as a jar with a tight fitting lid. Get in the habit of carrying some with you to snack on between meals. The trail mix will keep for several weeks in your cupboard, but it tastes so good that it will probably be gone much sooner!

Sample 1 Day Menu Plan

Breakfast:

Cereal with added almond slivers and raisins
Toast with peanut butter
Juice

Mid-Morning Snack:

1-2 ounces of trail mix
Juice

Lunch:

Sandwich with 1-2 slices of cheese
Piece of fruit
Low fat chocolate milk

Mid-Afternoon Snack:

Low fat yogurt with trail mix
or
Low fat milk and Fig Newtons

Dinner:

Baked chicken or fish
Rice and beans
or
Pasta with meat sauce (the sauce could have ground chicken, turkey, beans, or tofu in it)
Salad with regular dressing

After Dinner Snack:

Apple slices with peanut butter
Tea with lemon and sugar
Low Fat Yogurt or Sherbet

Stress and (Not) Eating

You may realize that your inability to gain weight may be due in part to stress. Many people don't feel like eating when they are anxious. On campus that can be a constant state! Stress will eventually effect more than just your appetite, so deal with it early on.

Health Promotion offers Stress Management Counseling designed to help you manage the level of stress in your life. For more information call 642-2000. Psychological and Counseling Services offers help and referrals for therapy. You can make an appointment at 642-9494.

