
Ways to Add Calories and Protein

Listed below are sources of high calorie and protein foods. You may need to eat more calories to help you gain weight or prevent weight loss. You may need to eat more protein to help your body heal from illness or surgery.

Butter, Soft Tub Margarine, or Oils

- Melt butter or margarine over potatoes, rice, pasta, cooked vegetables
- Add to bread, hot cereals, soups, casseroles, sauces, salads
- Sauté or stir fry vegetables, meat, chicken, fish, or use oil as a marinade

Cheese

- Melt on scrambled eggs, casseroles, potatoes, vegetables, pasta, rice
- Add to omelets and sandwiches
- Have crackers with cheese or use melted cheese as a dipping sauce
- Eat cottage cheese or string cheese as a snack with fruit

Milk and Milk Products

- Use whole milk instead of low-fat
- Use in place of water when cooking hot cereal, or pour on hot or cold cereal
- Pour on chicken or fish while baking or mix in hamburgers or meatloaf
- Add whipping cream to desserts, pancakes, waffles, fruit, hot chocolate, or mix with soups and casseroles
- Add sour cream to baked potatoes and vegetables
- Use to make gravy or cream sauces to add to noodles, potatoes, rice, meats
- Blend yogurt with fruit to make a smoothie or use as a dipping sauce for fruit
- Use whipping or heavy cream, condensed milk, or yogurt added to items

Dry Milk Powder

- Add to milk, milkshakes, smoothies, casseroles, meatloaf, mashed potatoes, macaroni and cheese, cream soups, eggs, hot cereal, pudding, custard
- Make Super Milk by mixing ½ cup of dry milk powder and 1 quart of whole milk. Keep chilled in refrigerator and drink or use in recipes.

Mayonnaise

- Use in chicken salad, tuna salad, egg salad, pasta salad
- Use on sandwiches

Dried Fruit

- Try prunes, raisins, dried cranberries, dates, figs, and apricots
- Add to sweeten hot or cold cereals, salads, yogurt
- Combine with granola or nuts for a snack

Avocados and Olives

- Add to sandwiches, salads, Mexican food, soups, casseroles, eggs

High-Calorie Smoothies, Shakes, and Supplements

- Use powdered drink mixes such as Carnation Breakfast Essentials®, Whey Powder, Nesquik®, or Ovaltine® to flavor milk, yogurt, smoothies, hot cereal
- Try a commercial nutrition supplement like Ensure Plus® or Boost Plus®
- Ask your Registered Dietitian for recipes

Sweets

- Add honey, jelly, or maple syrup to hot cereal, fruit, bread, bagel, pancakes, waffles, crackers, tea
- Choose higher calorie desserts such as cakes, cobblers, ice cream, custard

Peanut Butter and Other Nut Butters

- Spread on sandwiches, toast, muffins, crackers, waffles, pancakes, fruits slices, raw vegetables
- Mix in with hot cereal
- Blend with milkshakes or swirl through soft ice cream

Nuts, Seeds, and Grains

- Try wheat germ, oat bran, sunflower seeds, chia seeds, and ground flaxseed
- Add to casseroles, breads, muffins, pancakes, waffles, cookies
- Sprinkle on fruit, cereal, ice cream, yogurt, vegetables, salad, toast

Meat, Poultry, Fish, and Beans

- Add chopped, cooked meat to vegetables, salads, casseroles, soups, pasta, sauces
- Use in omelets, soufflés, quiches, sandwich fillings, stuffing
- Wrap in pie crust to make a turnover or tortilla to make a burrito or taco
- Add to stuffed baked potatoes

Eggs

- Add chopped, hard-boiled eggs to salads, casseroles, soups, vegetables
- Keep hard-boiled eggs in the refrigerator for a snack
- Use cooked eggs for a sandwich filling
- Wrap scrambled eggs in a tortilla with beans and cheese

Tofu

- Blend with fruits and juices for a smoothie
- Add chunks of firm tofu to soups or mix crumbled tofu into a meatloaf

Snack or Meal Ideas	Calories	Protein
1 cup whole milk Greek yogurt with ¼ cup granola and 1 Tbsp. chia seeds	347	19
Smoothie made with 1 cup whole milk, 6 oz. whole milk Greek yogurt, 1 banana, 1 scoop (28g) whey protein, and 1 Tbsp. peanut butter	609	43
Bagel with 2 Tbsp. cream cheese and 1 Tbsp. jelly	486	15
1 cup cooked oatmeal made with 1 cup whole milk, 1 Tbsp. honey, ½ banana and 1 Tbsp. raisins	446	14
PB&J: 2 Tbsp. peanut butter and 1 Tbsp. jelly on two slices whole wheat bread	400	15
Turkey sandwich: 3oz meat with ½ cup avocado and 1 Tbsp. mayonnaise on two slices whole wheat bread	462	24
1 cup cottage cheese with 1 cup canned fruit in heavy syrup and 1 Tbsp. chia seeds	456	27
Trail mix: 1 oz. almonds, ¼ cup raisins and 1 cup Wheat Chex® cereal	441	12
2 corn tortillas with 1 oz. mozzarella cheese, ½ medium avocado, 2 Tbsp. salsa and 3 oz. chicken	495	37
1 cup turkey chili with beans over a baked potato	420	30
1 cup lentil soup mixed with 1 cup whole milk	350	17
2 graham cracker squares with 2 Tbsp. peanut butter and 1 cup whole milk	403	16

Your calorie needs are _____ calories per day.

Your protein needs are _____ grams protein per day.

Contact your local VA Dietitian for more information.