

# How to Choose High Protein and High Energy Foods

## Information for patients and families

Read this booklet to learn:

- Why eating enough protein and energy is important
- Ways to add protein and energy
- Snack ideas
- Other helpful tips



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Staff: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_



## **Eating enough protein and energy is important to stay healthy.**

**Protein** helps your body heal, feeds your muscles and helps you build more muscle. It also keeps your immune system strong so you can fight infections.

**Energy** from the foods you eat gives your body fuel. Eating enough energy keeps you at a healthy weight. The amount of energy in foods is measured in **calories**.

You don't need to eat more food to get more protein and energy. You can add protein and energy to the food you already eat.

## **How to choose high protein foods**

Eat 1 or more servings of protein at each meal and with snacks.

Here are some examples:

### **Meat, poultry and fish**

- Add ground or chopped meats (beef, lamb, pork, chicken, turkey) to salads, casseroles, soups, eggs and pasta dishes.
- Mix canned fish with mayonnaise on salads, crackers, wraps or bread.

### **Milk**

- Drink whole milk, 2% milk, or chocolate milk after meals or between meals.
- Add milk to soups, sauces, and hot cereals.
- Eat yogurt or Greek yogurt on its own or with fruit and cereals. Choose yogurts with higher milk fat by choosing 2% milk fat (M.F.) or higher on the label.
- Drink soy milk or other soy drinks or add them to smoothies, soups and casseroles.
- Make high protein milk by mixing 2 tablespoons (60 millilitres) of skim milk powder into 1 cup (250 millilitres) of whole milk.

## **Cheese**

- Add cheese to sandwiches, soups or sauces.
- Add grated cheese to potatoes, omelettes, casseroles, rice and salads.
- Eat cheese like cottage cheese (more than 2% fat) as a snack during the day.

## **Eggs**

- Enjoy eggs cooked any way (omelettes, poached, fried, boiled, scrambled).
- Add them to soups, salads, and casseroles.
- Enjoy omelettes with cheese or ground meat.
- Keep hard boiled eggs in the refrigerator to use as snacks.

## **Nut butters (for example, peanut butter or almond butter)**

- Spread them on sandwiches, muffins, crackers, or raw vegetables.
- Add them to ice cream and milkshakes.

## **Nuts**

- Sprinkle them on fruit slices, ice cream, cereals and salads.
- Add them to muffins, casseroles, bread recipes and hamburgers.
- Snack on nuts throughout the day.

## **Beans (also called legumes)**

- Add beans, lentils and chickpeas to salads, soups, rice, pasta and vegetable dishes.
- Eat hummus dip with crackers or vegetables.
- Eat tofu on its own or add to smoothies, soups and casseroles.
- Try veggie burgers or hot dogs if you don't eat meat.

## **How to choose high energy foods**

### **Butter, margarine and vegetable oils**

- add to hot cereals, soups, mashed potatoes, rice, pasta and cooked vegetables.
- spread on bread when making sandwiches

### **Table cream and whipped cream**

- use in soups and sauces
- add to hot chocolate, Jell-O desserts and cereals
- put on top of pancakes, waffles, French toast and fruit

### **Cream cheese and mayonnaise**

- add to sandwiches, bagels, and crackers

### **Jams, syrups and honey**

- add to breads, muffins, yogurt, and hot cereal
- spread on pancakes, waffles and French toast

### **Gravies and sauces**

- add beef, pork, chicken or vegetarian gravy to meats, vegetables, or mashed potatoes.
- add cream or cheese sauces to any meal

## Snack ideas

- ✓ bagel with cream cheese or peanut butter
- ✓ cereal and milk
- ✓ cheese or hummus with crackers
- ✓ congee with meat, fish or tofu
- ✓ cooked egg on toast
- ✓ cottage cheese or yogurt with fruit
- ✓ granola or trail mix (dried fruit, nuts, seeds)
- ✓ ice cream sprinkled with nuts or fruit
- ✓ milk and cookies
- ✓ milkshake or smoothie
- ✓ peanut butter and jelly or banana sandwich
- ✓ pizza (frozen mini, pizza pocket or slice)
- ✓ pudding (tapioca or rice) or custards
- ✓ roti and dahl
- ✓ soup with extra meat or starchy vegetables (potatoes, peas, beans, legumes)



## Other helpful tips

- Have small snacks during the day. This may be easier than eating a large meal. Try to eat at least 3 meals and 2 snacks each day.
- Try a few bites of food every 2 to 3 hours even if you are not hungry. Make every bite count by choosing high protein, high energy foods.
- Bring foods with you when you go out. It may not be easy to find the right foods when you are away from home.
- Nutrition supplements (drinks that are high in protein and energy) can help you get enough protein and energy. Your dietitian recommends:  

---
- Drinking fluids can be a great way to increase the protein and energy you take in. Some fluids can be filling, so drink them at the end of your meals or between meals.
- Make extra food when you cook so you have leftovers for another meal.
- Weigh yourself weekly. If you are losing weight, you may need to add more high protein and high energy foods to your meals.



## Have feedback about this document?

Please fill out our survey. Use this link: [surveymonkey.com/r/uhn-pe](https://surveymonkey.com/r/uhn-pe)

Visit [www.uhnpatienteducation.ca](http://www.uhnpatienteducation.ca) for more health information. Contact [pfep@uhn.ca](mailto:pfep@uhn.ca) to request this brochure in a different format, such as large print or electronic formats.

© 2022 University Health Network. All rights reserved. Use this material for your information only. It does not replace advice from your doctor or other health care professional. Do not use this information for diagnosis or treatment. Ask your health care provider for advice about a specific medical condition. You may print 1 copy of this brochure for non-commercial and personal use only.