

High Calorie Choices for Children

Eating enough calories is important for your child to grow and gain weight. These high calorie food ideas will give your child added calories without having to eat large amounts of food.

Grain Products

- whole grain or enriched bread, muffins, biscuits or crackers topped with butter, margarine and/or cheese, cream cheese or peanut butter
- chapatis or dumplings cooked in oil
- whole grain cereals with cream, sugar and/or dried fruit
- rice and pasta/noodles with added sauce or margarine and/or cream or meat sauce
- high calorie cookies, e.g. oatmeal raisin, peanut butter, chocolate chip, shortbread

Compare:

1 slice whole wheat bread = 73 calories ⇨ with butter (5 mL/1 tsp) butter + peanut butter (15 mL/1 Tbsp.) = 215 calories

125 mL (½ cup) noodles = 68 calories ⇨ with 5 mL (1 tsp) margarine + 30 mL (1 Tbsp.) Parmesan cheese = 150 calories

Vegetables and Fruit

- fresh fruit sprinkled with sugar or served with whipped cream or a dip
- canned fruit in syrup (not fruit juice)
- dried fruit – raisins, dried cranberries, dates, prunes, peaches, pineapple and apricots (for toddlers finely chopped to avoid choking); add to cereals, yogurt or ice cream
- 100% fruit juice such as grape or apple (Limit juice to 125-250 mL (½ - 1 cup) per day for toddlers and 250-500 mL (1-2 cups) for teens.)
- vegetables with cream, margarine, butter, dip or cheese or stir-fried in oil
- thick, chunky style soups

Compare:

125 mL (½ cup) fresh berries = 45 calories ⇨ with 125 mL (½ cup) ice cream = 180 calories

⇨ or with 30 mL (2 Tbsp.) whipped cream = 95 calories

Milk Products

- homogenized (whole) milk, “High Calorie Milk” (see over), milkshakes, flavoured enriched soy milks
- flavoured yogurt with the highest percent milk fat (MF) content (e.g. 3% MF)
- puddings, custards and cream soups made with whole milk, “High Calorie Milk” or cream
- whipping cream added to cereals, hot chocolate and desserts
- hard cheese, cheese slices, cheese strings, cheese spread

Compare:

250 mL (1 cup) skim milk = 90 calories ⇨ 250 mL (1 cup) whole milk = 157 calories

Meat and Alternatives

- meat, poultry or fish with gravy, butter, margarine, tartar sauce, cheese or creamy sauce
- curry made with cream or coconut sauce
- eggs with added fat, e.g. fried, scrambled or omelette
- legumes, lentils, baked beans
- peanut butter (for toddlers thinly spread to avoid choking) on vegetables, fruit, whole grain breads, or crackers
- for older children, nuts and seeds mixed with dried fruit

Compare:

regular ground beef patty (50 g) = 145 kcal ⇔ with a cheese slice (30 g/1 oz) = 255 kcal

Fats and Oils

- margarine, butter, oil, salad dressing, sour cream, gravy, cream or cheese sauces added to foods such as vegetables, meat, pasta, rice, hot cereals, breads, muffins, crackers
- for older children—buttered popcorn, pizza, egg rolls

■ Fat is a concentrated source of energy—a small amount has many calories. To meet their needs for growth, children need more fat than adults do.

Tips

- Offer three meals and 2-3 snacks each day.
- Offer snacks at least two hours before the next meal so that your child's appetite will not be spoiled. Bedtime is a good time for a high calorie snack as breakfast is at least 8 hours later.
- Avoid "empty calorie" foods that contain calories but have little nutrient value, e.g. candy, soft drinks, potato chips and candy bars.
- Limit the amount of clear broth, juice, fruit beverages, powdered drink mixes or soft drinks. They will decrease your child's appetite for other foods.
- Be a role model with your own eating habits. Children like to copy their parents.
- Let your child decide how much to eat. Avoid force feeding, as this may cause your child to eat less.
- Eat at the table. Avoid distractions such as TV, videos and radio.

High Calorie Milk

(use as recommended by your dietitian)

250 mL (1 cup) homogenized milk
30 mL (2 Tbsp.) 10% M.F. cream
30 mL (2 Tbsp.) skim milk powder

Makes 280 mL (225 calories and 12.3 g protein)

For a larger recipe...

1 L (4 cups) homogenized milk
125 mL (½ cup) 10% M.F. cream
125 mL (½ cup) skim milk powder

Makes 1250 mL (1.25 litres)



High Calorie Food Tips

The following tips will help increase calories in your child's diet by adding extra fat, protein or carbohydrate to foods your child already enjoys. The foods added are generally high in fat since fat has more calories than protein or carbohydrate.

Food	Amount	Calories Added	Use In or On
Regular Margarine/Butter	5 mL (1 tsp)	35	cooked cereals, breads, toast, muffins, bagels, crackers, rice, pasta/noodles, vegetables, potatoes, soups
Vegetable Oil	5 mL (1 tsp)	40	cooked cereals, pasta/noodles, rice, cooked vegetables, salads
Salad Dressing (Regular)	15 mL (1 tbsp)	65	raw or cooked vegetables, salads, baked potatoes, dip for crackers/vegetables
Mayonnaise (Regular)	15 mL (1 tbsp)	70 - 100	salads, dips, devilled egg, sandwiches, vegetables
Half & Half Cream (10% cereal cream or table cream)	15 mL (1 tbsp)	20	cooked or cold cereals, hot chocolate, shakes, puddings, soups
Whipping Cream (whipped)	15 mL (1 tbsp)	25	canned fruits, berries, puddings, cakes, pies, dip for fresh fruit, hot chocolate
Cream Cheese	15 mL (1 tbsp)	50	toast, crackers, bagels, muffins, raw vegetables
Evaporated Whole Milk	15 mL (1 tbsp)	20	cooked cereals, hot chocolate, substitute for water in cooking, soups
Skim Milk Powder (dry)	15 mL (1 tbsp)	15	muffins, pancakes, whole milk, shakes, mashed potatoes, scrambled eggs, meat loaf
Grated Cheese	15 mL (1 tbsp)	30	scrambled eggs, cooked vegetables, casseroles, pasta/noodles, mashed/baked potatoes, sandwiches
Cheese Spread	15 mL (1 tbsp)	45	breads, toast, muffins, bagels, crackers, pasta/noodles, cooked vegetables, potatoes, celery
Peanut Butter (thinly spread to avoid choking)	15 mL (1 tbsp)	95	breads, toast, muffins, bagels, crackers, cookies, celery, fresh fruit
Dried Fruit e.g. raisins, apricots, cranberries (for toddlers-finely chopped to avoid choking)	15 mL (1 tbsp)	20 - 40	cereals, yogurt, ice cream

More Tips:

- Add cream or cheese sauce to cooked vegetables.
- Top desserts or canned fruit with rich ice cream or whipped cream.
- Sprinkle granola or chopped nuts on yogurt, ice cream or other cereals.
- Sauté almonds or sesame seeds in butter and mix with cooked vegetables.
- Serve gravy with most meats/poultry. Tip: leftover gravy can be frozen in ice cube trays and transferred to freezer bags.
- When making muffins or breads, add extra chopped nuts, dried fruit and/or chocolate chips.
- Try dips (e.g. Minigo™ or salad dressing) for fruit or vegetables.
- Your dietitian may recommend adding Polycose powder to foods.