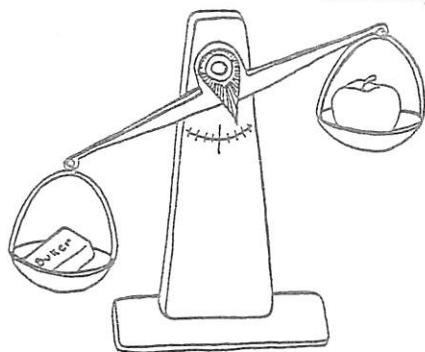


Calorie Boosters: Tips for Tanking Up

All foods are not created equal. Fat provides more than twice the calories of either protein or carbohydrate (9 calories versus 4 calories per gram).

Fat heavier than Protein or Carbohydrate



By adding fat to your child's diet, you can greatly increase calories without increasing the volume of food. This is good news when dealing with tiny tummies and little appetites.

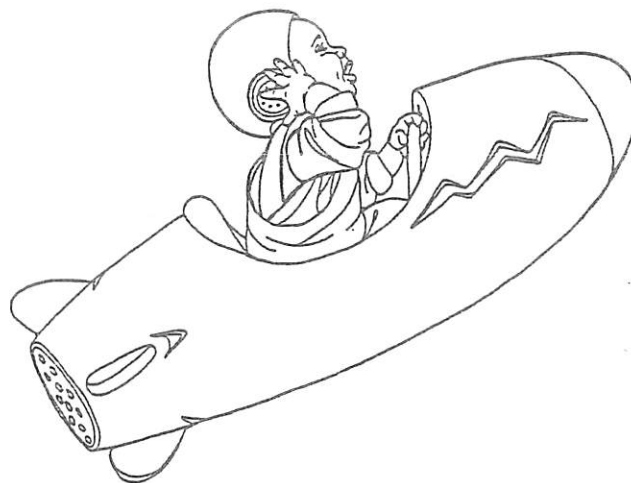
Most adults hear warning bells at the word *fat*. Research has shown that, for adults, a low-fat diet is the healthiest way to go.

But young children, and especially children with problems gaining weight, need higher amounts of fat to provide enough calories to fuel their greater growth requirements. Later, as growth reaches appropriate levels, the emphasis on fat can be reduced.

Sometimes parents think that a high-protein diet is the key to weight gain. It isn't. Extra protein is *not* stored as muscle. In fact, diets too high in protein can put a strain on young kidneys and actually be harmful to health. Only a relatively small amount of protein is needed for growth. This should be provided if your child is eating appropriately from the basic food groups: dairy, meat and meat alternatives, fruits and vegetables, and breads and cereals.

Make Every Bite Count

Every meal and every snack provides an occasion to sneak in calories. Don't pass up these golden opportunities. Be sure to add at least one and possibly several calorie boosters to each food.



Provide Favorite Foods

Favorite foods are a good starting point. This helps increase your child's acceptance of meals while you are experimenting with adding calorie boosters. But don't neglect new and different foods to provide needed variety to the diet. Sometimes a few bites of a favorite food can make the rest of the meal a winner.

If at First You Don't Succeed . . .

Children's tastes change as fast as they do. If your child doesn't like a food, try it again every few weeks. A previous reject may become a favorite. The more foods your child will eat, the more ways you have to increase calories.

Prevent Power Struggles

Although increased calories are important for your child's healthy growth, try to avoid common pitfalls. Don't beg or plead with your child to eat. Don't follow the child around trying to get down "just one more bite." Children quickly will sense your desperation and often respond by refusing to eat altogether. Now they get an even bigger response from you—and a vicious cycle has been created.

Calmly try the suggestions you worked out with your feeding team. If the ideas don't work, discuss new alternatives. Keep in close contact with your child's doctor for routine evaluations of your child's growth.

And Finally . . .

Watch out for signs of diarrhea, which can indicate too much fat too soon. Check with your dietitian for further suggestions and to ensure that your child is still receiving all needed nutrients.

Special Instructions

Calorie Boosters: Fueling with Food Group Variety

The most obvious way to give your child more calories is to choose high-calorie foods. But remember, your child still needs to eat a varied diet.

Each of the four food groups has a bounty to offer: dairy, meat and meat alternatives, fruits and vegetables, and breads and cereals. The foods listed below supply diversity and needed calories. Make sure you offer only the foods that match your child's feeding skills.

Use Whole-Milk Dairy Products



Whole-milk dairy products provide many more calories than low-fat or skim milk products. This may mean buying double for a few items—whole-milk products for your little one and low-fat or skim milk products for the rest of the family. Finding whole-milk products can take some extra time, since there is a higher demand for reduced-fat foods. Be sure the label states *whole milk* or *4% fat*. The extra effort in carefully reading the labels will be well worth it in terms of extra calories.

- whole milk plain or with instant breakfast powders
- whole-milk cheeses (cheddar, jack, American, and so on)
- pudding (made with whole milk)
- custard
- ice cream
- kefir
- fruit yogurt (check labels)
- 4% milkfat cottage cheese
- Ovaltine
- milk shakes
- eggnog



Choose High-Fat Meats/Meat Alternatives



Selections based on cut and preparation provide a high-calorie advantage.

- cheeseburgers
- luncheon meats
- hot dogs
- fish sticks
- fried chicken with skin
- ham
- spareribs
- ground beef
- breaded fish
- dark-meat turkey with gravy
- nut butters (peanut butter, other nuts)
- fried beans

Fruits/Vegetables



In general, fruits and vegetables don't supply a lot of calories because they are high in water and fiber. Fruits and vegetables do provide good nutrition in terms of both vitamins and minerals. Good sources of vitamin A (apricots, mangos, carrots, sweet potatoes, greens) and vitamin C (citrus, bell peppers, broccoli) should be provided daily. When low-calorie fruits and vegetables are served, you can greatly increase the caloric impact by including salad dressing, butter, grated cheese, and other high-calorie additions. For relatively high-calorie fruits and vegetables, these are good choices:

- bananas
- avocados
- fruits canned in heavy syrup
- coconuts (grated and milk)
- peas and corn (served creamed or with cheese sauce added)
- dried fruit (pureed for smoother texture)
- frozen juices reconstituted with less water

Breads and Cereals



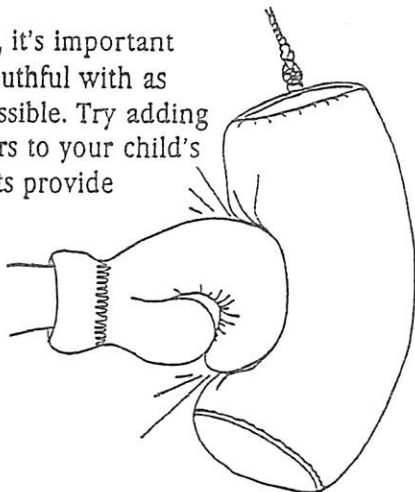
High-calorie foods + high-calorie spreads = high-calorie winners!

- pancakes, french toast, and waffles (top with butter, syrup, wheat germ, fruit yogurt, powdered sugar, whipped cream)
- muffins (spread with butter and jam)
- sweet breads such as banana bread or walnut-raisin-date bread (try serving with cream cheese or peanut butter)
- biscuits covered with gravy
- cooked cereals with added butter, raisins, brown sugar, ground nuts
- granola-type sweetened cereals with dried fruits and nuts
- convenience potato, rice, or noodle mixes served with added butter, cheese, whole milk, gravy, wheat germ

Special Instructions

Calorie Boosters that Pack a Punch

For some children, it's important to pack every mouthful with as many calories as possible. Try adding these calorie boosters to your child's foods. Small amounts provide big calorie payoffs!



Butter/Margarine, Vegetable Oil, Mayonnaise

(35 to 40 calories/teaspoon)

Add to baby foods, vegetables, sandwiches, casseroles, soups, rice, pasta, and whatever. These calorie boosters go with almost any food.

Wheat Germ

**(25 calories/tables-
poon)**

Wheat germ can be added easily to homemade baked goodies such as pancakes, cookies, and breads. It is also good over yogurt, fruit, and cooked cereals.

Powdered Milk

**(25 calories/tables-
poon)**

Your child won't even know when you add it to ground meat, milk shakes, mashed potatoes, cooked cereals, casseroles, and yogurt.

Sprinkle on Cheese

(about 100 calories/ounce)



Add grated cheese or cheese sauce or sprinkle parmesan on buttered toast, creamed vegetables, mashed potatoes, rice, pasta, scrambled eggs, cooked cereals, casseroles, meat, and fish.

Cream Cheese

**(50 calories/tables-
poon)**

Cream cheese makes the start of a good dip for crackers, vegetables, and fruits. It also makes a nice spread for baked breads and buttered muffins.

Cooked Egg Yolk

(about 60 calories/yolk)



Cooked egg yolk can be added to all kinds of foods. The egg yolk must be already cooked if it is going to be added to a food that will not be cooked. This is to prevent salmonella infection. The American Heart Association suggests limiting whole eggs to three a week.

Whipping Cream (Heavy)

**(50 calories/tables-
poon)**

Add a touch to drinks or desserts.

Peanut Butter

**(100 calories/tables-
poon)**

Makes a great spread on some vegetables, crackers, toast, muffins, waffles—but make sure your child has the feeding skills to eat it. Peanut butter also tastes great in milk shakes, cookies, and pudding.

Sour Cream

**(25 calories/tables-
poon)**

Tastes great on potatoes or added to casseroles and sauces.

Avocado

(75 calories per 1/4 avocado)

Kids usually like avocados. Try adding them to vegetables, on top of crackers, with meats or beans, and as a guacamole dip.