



...because health matters!

Nutrition Matters

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Winning at Gaining

A recent Health Attitudes and Behaviours Survey found that 19% of grade 7 boys and 29% of grade 10 boys wanted to gain weight. Although the number of girls wanting to do this was smaller, it was significant with 12% of grade 7 girls and 9% of grade 10 girls saying they wanted to gain weight. The



reasons for wanting to gain weight may be to look better, to improve athletic performance or to feel better.

Why some teenagers are under weight

The adolescent growth spurt may explain why some teenagers are underweight. It is hard to predict when the adolescent growth spurt will occur in the individual teenager because it differs between boys and girls and also among teens of the same sex.

During the period from 10 to 20 years of age, a teenage boy increases his weight by about 25-30 kg (55-67 lbs) and his height by about 20-34 cm (8-14"). During the same period, a teenage girl's height increases about 5-24 cm (2-9") and her weight by about 9-22 kg (20-49 lbs).

This growth spurt greatly increases nutrient needs. Usually, a teenager's natural appetite increases during the growth spurt. Their increased nutrient needs are not met because of lifestyle factors such as level of activity, choice of foods, missed meals or the adoption of nontraditional eating patterns. For example, the extremely active teenage boy who requires 4,000 calories a day may fail to maintain a healthy weight for height unless his diet provides enough high energy, high nutrient foods.

Is there an "ideal" weight?

There isn't one "ideal" weight for height. The commonly used height/weight tables produced by the Metropolitan Life Insurance Company should not be applied to teenagers. The ideal weight for height and body frame can be determined by height/weight curves designed for teenagers.

Four factors affecting weight gain:

- Genetics
- Food Intake
- Exercise
- Rest & Recovery

Your genetic make-up will influence the effect of the other three factors. Remember, you cannot change your genetic make-up.

TO EFFECTIVELY GAIN WEIGHT:

- Include a progressive resistance strength-training program.
- Ensure adequate food intake. You may need to eat more.
- Ensure adequate rest and exercise recovery.
- Plan on gaining weight gradually. A reasonable goal is 1 kg (2 lbs) per week.



- Buy unsliced bread and slice it thick.
- Choose starchy vegetables (such as peas, potatoes, lima beans, corn, etc.).
- Choose dried fruit often (raisins, dried apricots, pears, etc.).

YOU NEED EXTRA ENERGY TO BUILD MUSCLE

You need more Calories from carbohydrate, protein, and fat. Carbohydrate helps promote growth of muscle protein.

- Choose high energy, nutrient-dense foods from the four food groups.
- Increase portion size of foods and beverages.
- At meals, choose high-energy foods first, have salads and soup last.

Are you managing your daily schedule to include time to eat?

- Plan ahead (meals/snacks, exercise/rest).
- Don't skip meals, especially breakfast.
- Eat frequently throughout the day - **at least 3 meals and 3 snacks each day**

Are you drinking high-energy fluids?

- Drink juices, milk, milkshakes, or meal replacement drinks.
- If fluids make you too full at meals, try drinking between meals.

High energy, nutrient-dense suggestions:

- Choose high-energy cereals (such as muesli, granola, shreddies, shredded wheat, raisin bran) or energy bars.
- Cook hot cereals with milk.
- Add fresh or dried fruits (such as apricots, raisins, dates, figs) nuts, seeds, or sugar to cereals.
- Eat high quality protein foods: meat, poultry, fish, eggs, soy products, milk products, etc.

- Add less water than suggested to frozen juices.
- Choose higher energy juices (such as grape, apricot nectar, pineapple, apple) or cranberry cocktail.
- Add powdered milk/instant breakfast to milk or to fortified soy beverage.
- Use flavoured milk or make milkshakes with ice milk/yogurt/ice cream, and fruit.
- Add fruit and granola to yogurt.
- Eat ice milk/sherbet/ice cream for dessert.
- Snack on "trail mix" (nuts, sunflower seeds, dried fruit).
- Add peanut butter, jam, jelly, and honey to muffin, bread, and biscuits, etc.
- Eat snacks such as milk pudding and custards, oatmeal raisin cookies, date squares, banana bread, frozen dairy products (ice cream, ice milk, frozen yogurt), fresh/dried fruit, trail mix.

Simple SNACK suggestions:

1. A piece of fruit and granola topped with yogurt.
2. Peanut butter and banana sandwich with milk.
3. Meat, lettuce, and tomato sandwich with milk.
4. Graham crackers/bagel/English muffin with peanut butter.
5. Milkshake: milk, ice cream, and fruit.
6. Trail mix: raisins, peanuts, chocolate chips, dried fruit, banana chips, dates, pretzels, and cereal.
7. Cheese and vegetable pizza (10" with thick crust).

**DON'T BE DISCOURAGED
GAINING WEIGHT TAKES TIME!**