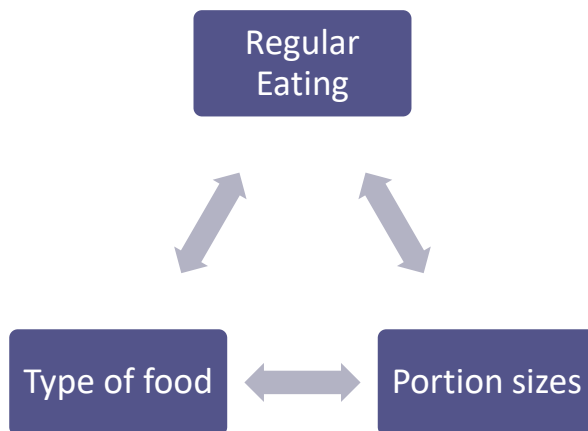


## High energy diet tips

Children and young people who are underweight need more energy (calories) from their food. To support them to gain weight it is important to think a little differently about regular healthy eating guidelines. This is often only a short term measure until weight is restored.

### Supporting weight gain

These are three main things to consider when supporting people to gain weight.



Without each of these elements being properly incorporated to your young person's daily diet, she/he could continue to lose weight and be at risk of malnutrition.

This leaflet will help you consider how you can influence the **types of foods** your child eats so that they are consuming enough calories over the course of the day.

As the diagram suggests, the types of food is important to increase energy intake, but not the only thing. Speak with your dietitian or health professional about how to encourage regular eating (3 meals and 3 snacks per day) and making sure the correct portion sizes are provided.

### **How can I increase energy of food?**

Making sure all food provided is as energy dense as possible will help children and young people get all the calories they need. This can be particularly helpful if their appetite is small or eating larger volumes of food is a challenge. Including foods that are naturally higher in energy, and/or increasing energy content of food through enriching them can be helpful.

#### **Foods naturally high in energy would include;**

Cheese (full fat)

Full fat milk

Full fat yoghurts,

Puddings and ice-cream

Nuts, nut butters and seeds

Granola, muesli and some cereal bars or flapjacks

Dried fruit

Pastry (such as croissants, pies and quiches)

Cakes, tarts, pies and tray bakes

Processed meats such as sausages, chorizo, salami or bacon rashers

Avocado and avocado dips

Mayonnaises

Creamy or cheesy sauces, hollandaise sauce or Caesar dressing

Fattier cuts of meat or full fat mince

Chocolate, chocolate nuts

Biscuits and shortbread

Crisps

**Puddings** and desserts can be really helpful to increase energy intake, particularly in the initial stages of weight gain.

Some ideas might be;

Ice cream

Apple pie

Thick and creamy yoghurts

Trifles

Brownies

Sticky toffee pudding

Cream cakes such as chocolate éclairs and profiteroles

Chocolate cake

Crème Brulee or Panacotta

Fortifying food is where we add extra calories to help maximise energy intake. This is particularly helpful when you're young person is sensitive to larger food volumes but still needs to eat more energy.

### **Some food fortification ideas;**

#### **Cream**

- Choose pouring double cream, whipped cream or crème fraiche, coconut cream
- add to sauces, mashed potatoes and creamy soups
- Add to puddings
- add to milk, hot chocolate, malted drinks and milkshakes
- stir into porridge, cereal and yoghurts
- add to any pasta or risotto dish
- pour onto fresh or tinned fruit

-use extra coconut cream/milk in curries, soups and puddings

## **Cheese**

- Choose hard, soft, grated, sliced
- Add extra cheese to sandwiches, toasties and pizzas
- Sprinkle cheese over pasta dishes, scrambled eggs, soups and baked potatoes.
- Cheese can be added to burgers, meatballs, fajitas, and sprinkled onto oven bakes or chilli carne
- creamy cheese can also be added to pasta dishes or used to stuff chicken breasts or used to make sauces for a meat or fish dish

## **Oil and Spreads**

- Choose vegetable, rapeseed, olive, sunflower oil , sesame oil or unsalted butter
- Fry/deep fry foods instead of boiling, baking, steaming or grilling where possible
- Adding some extra oil (such as olive oil) to pasta or rice dishes, dressings or sauces

- Add extra butter to vegetables, potatoes or spread thickly onto bread, toast, crackers, scones
- Roast vegetables in olive oil
- Drizzle plenty onto salads
- Add extra olive oil to hummus, tahini or guacomole

### **Sugar, jam, syrup and honey –**

- Add to cereals, porridge, milkshakes or smoothies
- Pour syrup onto buttered pancakes
- Spread jam or honey onto buttered crumpets, scones or toasts, French toasts
- Have fruit tinned in syrup

***Add chopped nuts, seeds, dried fruit wherever you can eg to yoghurt, smoothies, milkshakes, cereal, salads, sandwiches, noodles, rice dishes, meat dishes to increase the energy intake even more.***

### **Regular eating pattern**

Eating 3 meals per day and 3 snacks is really important.  
***Initially it may be difficult to do this immediately from having a restricted or irregular eating pattern so you may need to build up gradually over a few days until it feels more comfortable.***

Sometimes it can be difficult to get enough energy through food alone therefore higher calorie drinks such as milkshakes, flavoured milk, smoothies and hot chocolate can help. These can be added to your child's daily food intake to maximise calorie consumption. ***It would be better to have these drinks in between meals ie with a snack rather than before or during a meal. Choose these higher energy drinks over water, teas, coffee, squashes and avoid diet drinks as they may fill you up artificially, however, have minimal nutritional value.***