

High protein, high energy diet for children

This resource has information to help increase your child's eating to help promote weight gain or catch up growth. Your child may require this diet due to increased needs from short or long term illnesses.

Children need energy, protein and nutrients to grow and develop. A high protein, high energy diet may be recommended for your child to meet these increased needs.

List of foods to increase in your child's diet

High protein foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Full cream dairy products such as milk, cheese, yoghurt• Calcium fortified soy milk• Meat, fish & chicken• Eggs• Legumes such as lentils and beans• Nuts, seeds and their pastes (e.g. peanut butter, tahini)
High energy foods	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Plant based oils (e.g. olive oil or canola oil)• Avocado• Margarine, butter, cream• Full cream dairy products such as milk, cheese, yoghurt• Oil based salad dressings (e.g. mayonnaise)

What about 'junk' foods such as lollies and takeaway?

Allowing your child to eat lots of high energy snack foods (e.g. chocolate, lollies, chips, biscuits, soft drinks) or fast foods may reduce your child's appetite for healthier options. These 'junk' foods provide lots of calories, but are low in nutrients (i.e. vitamins and minerals) that are important for your child's growth and development. They may also learn to prefer these foods more than healthier options.

Nourishing drinks

Milk is a great base for nourishing drinks as it is high in protein and energy. Choose full cream milk as it contains more energy than low fat milk. Full cream calcium enriched soy milk (e.g. *So Good, Vitasoy*) or lactose free milk (e.g. *Zymil*) is also suitable for children that do not have cow's milk.

Adding milk powder to milk can help increase its energy and protein amount.

Higher energy milk recipes

- To every cup of milk (250mls) add 1 heaped tablespoon (~20g) of full cream or skim milk powder and whisk until dissolved.

Speak to your dietitian before starting this recipe to ensure it is needed for your child.

Tips for increasing protein and energy in your child's diet

- ✓ Offer your child small frequent meals and snacks every 2-3 hours
- ✓ Replace low fat foods with full cream/fat options
- ✓ Make mealtimes as pleasant and relaxed as possible; avoid distractions
- ✓ Try to include high protein / high energy foods at every meal and snack
- ✓ Try to keep a supply of these high energy high protein foods at home

In summary, extra protein and energy provides important nutrients for usual growth and development. As your child's nutrition and growth improve, often appetite and well-being improve.

Table of foods to choose to add energy and protein to your child's diet	
Ideas to add energy and protein	
Meat and meat alternatives (High protein)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include meat, chicken, fish or meat alternatives (such as baked beans, lentils, kidney beans, and tofu) at each meal
Cheese (High protein)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Serve on crackers/sandwiches • Grate onto vegetables • Add to rice/pasta • Cut into small blocks as a snack • Make cheese sauce to add to meals/vegetables
Full cream milk (High protein/energy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make homemade milkshake drinks with cream, milk and fruit • Make soups, puddings, custards, desserts with milk instead of water
Eggs (High protein)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add egg to salad (e.g. potato salad) • Try a hardboiled egg as a snack • Mash egg with mayonnaise as a sandwich topping • Try an omelette or quiche with chopped meat, vegetables and cheese
Nuts and seeds (High protein) **	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Try smooth peanut butter or other nut pastes as a spread • Try hummus or tahini as a dip or spread • Serve whole roasted nuts as a snack if age appropriate • Use in baking (e.g. almond meal)
Margarine, butter and oil (High energy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add to vegetables • Add to rice/pasta/potato • Spread thickly on bread and on savoury cracker • Add to soups
Cream (High energy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Add to milk, on breakfast cereals, porridge, desserts, custard, yoghurt, sauces or soups • Add sour cream to meal or side dishes • Add coconut cream to sweet or savory meals
Avocado (High energy)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spread on crackers, toast or sandwiches • Add in salads • Make guacamole dip (avocado mashed with lemon, salt and pepper)

** Whole nuts are a choking hazard for children under 3 years old

Your dietitian will tell you how long your child needs to follow this diet

How to increase protein and energy in your child's diet:

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Dietitian contact details:

Name: _____

Telephone: _____

For general healthy eating, follow a well-balanced diet for your child based on the Australian guidelines, as recommended by your dietitian:

Australian Guide to Healthy Eating

https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/images/the_guidelines/n55_agthe_large.jpg

Australian Guide to Healthy Eating – Specific amounts of food for your child

https://www.eatforhealth.gov.au/sites/default/files/content/The%20Guidelines/n55f_children_brochure.pdf