

WEIGHT GAIN AND PERFORMANCE

Many athletes desire to gain weight, or specifically lean muscle mass, to help improve performance. To do this, an athlete has to be committed to consuming more calories (carbohydrates, protein, and fat) than needed to maintain his/her body weight. This can be challenging for some people, but is required to put the body in an anabolic, or building state.

Remember, consistency is key!

This is a commitment that has to be followed 7 days a week to see the muscle mass gains you want!



Tips for Healthy Weight Gain

1. Eat 6-8 meals per day

- You should eat immediately when you wake up and continue eating meals and snacks every few hours throughout the day
- A high-calorie breakfast containing carbohydrates, high-quality protein, and good fats is essential to kick the body out of catabolism, or “breakdown mode”, and put it into anabolic, or building mode
- You should not skip meals or snacks

3 QUICK HIGH-CALORIE BREAKFASTS

- Whole grain bagel with peanut butter and banana, half-cup trail mix, and 16-20 ounces chocolate milk
- Whole grain bagel sandwich with two slices cheese, lean beef sausage, egg, and avocado with a smoothie made with whole milk, fruit, and peanut butter
- 3 scrambled eggs (or egg muffin cups) made with beef sausage or ground beef, cheese, and veggies, 1 cup granola with nuts and whole milk, banana, and 16-20 ounces chocolate milk

2. Focus on adding calories with fluids

- Drink milk or chocolate milk with meals
- Drink a sports drink throughout practice
- If appetite is low, use ready-to-drink shakes to provide calories in between meals
- Drink smoothies in-between meals, post-workout, and at night before bed
- Smoothie checklist:
 - » Carbohydrate: Fruit, honey, oats
 - » High-quality protein: Cow’s milk, Greek yogurt, protein powder
 - » Good fat: Nut butters, flaxseed meal, hemp hearts



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3. Add more good fats to eating routine

- Including foods like nuts, nut butters, trail mix, seeds, avocado, hummus, and fatty fish (salmon, trout, tuna, mackerel). Cook with oils like olive, avocado, grapeseed, peanut, or canola.
- Ways to incorporate into meals and snacks:
 - » Add honey, nut butters, nuts, and seeds to oatmeal
 - » Add nut butters to waffles, pancakes, toast, bagels, homemade energy bites, muffins, and fruit like bananas and apples
 - » Blend nut butters into smoothies and protein shakes
 - » Try peanut butter and jelly sandwiches as dessert
 - » Keep nut butter jar in backpack and consume spoonfuls throughout the day
 - » Snack on trail mix with nuts, seeds, granola, beef jerky, and dried fruit throughout the day
 - » Add nut crushings to proteins cooked at home
 - » Add avocado to burgers, sandwiches, and wraps

4. Make high-calorie food exchanges

- Instead of always trying to eat more food, focus on eating foods with higher calories at meals and snacks.

INSTEAD OF THIS:	CHOOSE THIS:
Sliced bread	Bagel or thick bun
Toast	Waffles, pancakes, or muffins
Jelly	Peanut butter
Crackers	Nuts
Candy	Trail mix
Skim milk	Whole milk/chocolate milk
Steamed veggies	Sauteed veggies with oil and added cheese
Water	Milk, chocolate milk, or ready-to-drink shakes
Water at practice	Sports drink at practice and competitions

5. Consume pre-, during-, and post-workout nutrition and hydration

- **Pre-workout:**
 - » Be sure to eat a pre-workout meal 2-4 hours before training and a carbohydrate-protein snack 30 minutes to one hour before the workout starts.
 - » Hydrate with sports drinks for additional calories.
- **During-workouts:**
 - » Hydrate with sports drinks for added calories.
 - » If workouts are longer than an hour, try to snack on carbohydrate-rich foods like 100% fruit snacks, sports foods like carbohydrate energy gels and chews, fruit, granola bars, etc.
 - » If there will be back-to-back practices or practice-lifting sessions, try to consume a protein bar, ready-to-drink shake, fruit, peanut butter crackers, etc. between training sessions.
- **Post-workout:**
 - » Be sure to consume a post-workout snack as soon as possible after training, ideally within 45 minutes.
 - » Post-workout snack should contain easy-to-digest carbohydrates and 15-25 grams of high-quality protein.
 - » Smoothies and post-workout shakes are convenient ways to get in carbohydrates, high-quality protein, and fluid.

