

High-Calorie Food List and Snack Ideas

The foods in this handout can be added to your usual food choices. Adding more calories can help with maintaining or gaining weight, and adding more protein helps with preserving muscle. Some of the foods offer more health benefits than others. Your registered dietitian nutritionist (RDN) can help you to choose the best options to meet your nutrition goals.

Foods that are a good source of both calories and protein are indicated with an asterisk.*

Food group	Recommended foods	Serving size	Calories	Protein (grams)
Milk and Dairy Alternatives	Whole milk*	1 cup	150	8
	Protein-fortified milk* (recipe below)	1 cup	211	14
	Soy milk*	1 cup	105	6
	Cheese*	1 ounce	115	7
	Cottage cheese*	½ cup	120	13
	Yogurt, full-fat*	6 ounces	150	6
	Greek yogurt, full-fat*	6 ounces	120 to 160	16
	Eggnog*	½ cup	180	4
	Yogurt drinks*	varies	varies	varies
	Ice cream	½ cup	130 to 270	2 to 5
Protein Foods	Beef*, pork*, chicken*, turkey*, and fish*	1 ounce	55 to 100	7
	Lunch meat*	3 slices	105	18
	Egg*	1	75	6
	Nut butters (like peanut or almond)*	2 tablespoon	190	8
	Nuts and seeds*	1 ounce	160 to 200	4 to 6
	Beans*, peas*, and lentils*	½ cup	100 to 120	14 to 18
	Hummus*	¼ cup	120	6
	Tofu*	½ cup	100	10
Grains	Raisin bread, muffins, and croissants	varies	varies	varies
	Pasta, rice, and quinoa			
	Granola, cold and hot cereals			



Food group	Recommended foods	Serving size	Calories	Protein (grams)
Vegetables	Any with added fat, cream, dips, or dressings	varies	varies	varies
Fruits	Any with added fat or sugar Dried fruit like raisins, apricots, or figs	varies 2 ounces	varies 160 to 185	varies 0
Fats and Oils	Avocado Butter, margarine, oil, or mayonnaise Heavy cream, half-and-half, and whipped cream Cream cheese Dips Olives Salad dressings Sour cream Canned coconut milk	½ 1 tablespoon 1 tablespoon 1 tablespoon varies 10 olives 1 tablespoon 1 tablespoon 1 tablespoon	100 to 150 100 10 to 60 50 varies 50 50 30 25	2 0 0 1 varies 0 0 0 0
Nutrition Supplements	Meal replacement bar* High calorie high protein nutritional drink* Protein powder, unflavored*	1 1 1 tablespoon	150 to 250 200 to 350 25	5 to 15 10 to 20 6
Other	Sugar, honey, jam, jelly, or syrup Gravy	1 tablespoon 4 tablespoon	50 25	0 1

High-Calorie Snack Ideas

100 to 300 calories

- Edamame (½ cup) and 1 tablespoon olive oil
- Hummus (¼ cup) with pita
- Tortilla chips and salsa and 2 tablespoon sour cream or ½ cup bean dip
- Roasted chickpeas (½ cup) and salt and pepper
- Avocado (½) on 1 slice toast
- Chai latte made with soy milk
- Frozen waffle with 1 tablespoon butter and 1 tablespoon syrup
- English muffin and 1 tablespoon nut butter
- Zucchini or pumpkin bread slice and 2 tablespoons cream cheese or honey
- Scrambled egg with ½ avocado
- Trail mix (¼ cup)
- Cottage cheese (½ cup) with canned peaches
- Baked tofu (½ cup) with dip
- Hot chocolate made with whole milk



300 to 500 calories

- Fruit yogurt (6-ounce container) and ½ cup granola
- Greek yogurt (½ cup) with chopped nuts/seeds/dried fruit chia seeds or flax seeds
- Rice or pasta (½ cup) with 1 tablespoon butter or olive oil and 1 tablespoon Parmesan cheese
- Sliced apple or banana or 1 ounce of pretzels with 2 tablespoons peanut butter
- Plain bagel and 2 tablespoons cream cheese
- Chicken drumstick and ½ cup mashed potato
- Oatmeal (1 cup) cooked with ½ cup whole milk and 1 tablespoon brown sugar, 1 tablespoon butter, and 1 tablespoon raisins
- 1 grilled cheese or quesadilla
- Protein-fortified milk (4 cups whole milk and 1 cup nonfat dry milk powder) with 2 graham crackers
- Lunchmeat and cheese roll ups (2)
- Peanut butter and jelly sandwich

More than 500 calories

- Chicken, tuna, or egg salad (½ cup) on bread or crackers and 1 cup whole milk
- Milkshake made with 2 tablespoon peanut or almond butter, 1 frozen banana, ½ cup whole milk, ½ cup ice cream
- Snack wrap: 1 flour tortilla, 2 slices ham, 2 slices cheese, and 1 tablespoon mayonnaise
- Stuffed pita: ¼ cup hummus, sliced avocado, olives, and tomatoes
- Premium ice cream (½ cup) topped with 1 ounce chopped nuts

Other Ideas:

