



Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital  
**Caring for your Child's Nutrition**

## High Calorie Foods for Toddlers

It is important for toddlers to eat enough calories for adequate growth and development, but this can be a challenge with some children. Sometimes there are medical conditions affecting the amount of foods eaten or limiting the amount of food that is absorbed. A medical condition may not exist, but behaviors can also be a challenge and may be affecting how much your child is eating.

Choose high calorie foods to help boost the amount of calories in your child's diet and meet your child's needs.

- When baking or cooking use whole milk, half and half, evaporated milk, condensed milk, or fortified milk (see "High Calorie Snack Recipes").
- Choose high-fat dairy products when selecting milk, yogurt, and cheese.
- Top vegetables, pasta, rice, casseroles, sauces, and sandwiches with shredded cheese.
- Eat string cheese or sliced cheese with crackers for a snack.
- Add chocolate or strawberry syrup to milk.
- Use peanut butter (if over 2 years of age), jams/jellies, butter, mayonnaise, and other spreads on breads, biscuits, waffles, pancakes, and sandwiches.
- Spread peanut butter (if over 2 years of age) on apples, bananas, and other fruits and vegetables.
- Add sauces and gravies for extra calories on potatoes, meats, noodles, and side dishes.
- Serve creamy soups like broccoli and cheese or cream of potato.
- Add fats (oil, butter, margarine) to vegetables. Choose higher fat cooking methods such as pan-frying.
- Bread meats before cooking.

- For toddlers still on baby food, add 2 mL of oil (just under ½ teaspoon) per 4 ounces of food.
- Avoid allowing your child to “graze” (eating and drinking constantly throughout the day). Instead, try to follow a structured meal and snacking schedule with 4-6 small meals a day.
- Feed high calorie foods before offering liquids.
- Offer no more than 4 ounces (½ cup) of juice each day. Choose higher calorie drinks like milk, milkshakes, smoothies, or formula supplements.

### What about Supplements?

Oral supplements are high calorie/high protein liquids with vitamins and minerals added to them. Generally these supplements are higher in calories than whole milk or juice. Supplements are convenient and easy to find in grocery and drug stores. Examples include Carnation® Instant Breakfast, PediaSure®, and BOOST® Kid Essentials.

### Calorie Boosters

Fats are an easy way to add calories to your child’s diet. Add fats (butter, cream, oil, spreads, etc) to foods like waffles, potatoes, fruits, breads and other foods whenever possible.

Food	Calories/teaspoon
Butter or Margarine	33
Sour Cream	10
Mayonnaise	33
Cream Cheese	17
Half and Half	7
Brown Sugar, Maple Syrup	15
Heavy whipping cream (unwhipped)	18
Evaporated Milk	8
Sweetened Condensed Milk	20
Powdered Milk	11
Oil (canola, corn)	40
	1 mL = 8 calories

## Recipes for High-Calorie Snacks

- **Fortified milk:** Mix  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup whole milk with  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup half and half.
- **Fruit smoothie:** Blend 2 ounces yogurt,  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup whole milk, and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup fruit (fresh or frozen). Add more milk if shake is too thick.
- **Oatmeal:** Prepare instant oatmeal with whole milk. Add peanut butter (if over 2 years of age), whipped topping, fruit, chocolate chips or fruit.
- **Milkshake:** Blend  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup whole milk,  $\frac{1}{2}$  packet Carnation Instant Breakfast powder, and  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup ice cream.
- **Monkey tail popsicle:** Place  $\frac{1}{2}$  a banana on stick and dip in fudge or melted chocolate. Roll in graham cracker crumbs or sprinkles and freeze.
- **Peanut Butter and Jelly French Toast:** Make a peanut butter and jelly sandwich using two slices of bread. Lightly beat 1 egg and  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup heavy whipping cream and dip sandwich in egg mixture. Melt butter in large skillet. Place sandwich in skillet and brown both sides.

### Additional Information:

If you have questions, call: \_\_\_\_\_, Registered Dietitian

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