

Food supplies nutrients and energy. Whether you want to gain, lose or maintain weight, it's important to choose foods that offer the most nutritional value for the calories they provide. In other words, you want to get the most bang for your buck. Weight loss is most successful when you pay attention to food choices and physical activity. These guidelines will prevent loss of water, electrolytes, minerals, muscle and bone.

Tips for Weight Reduction:

- Don't skip meals. Fuel your body regularly throughout the day to give you the energy you need.
- Severe food restriction causes excessive hunger which may lead to overeating. Enjoy foods from all food groups.
- Losing weight should be done in the off-season or during early-season conditioning so it doesn't hurt your performance.
- Eat consciously. Make sure when you eat that you are feeling hunger, not boredom or emotional need.
- Slow down. It takes your brain 20 minutes to register that the stomach is full.
- Moderate, don't eliminate. Instead of two cookies, choose one. Rather than chips daily, eat them every other day.
- Read food labels. Fat-free doesn't mean calorie-free. Also use labels to learn portion sizes.
- Consult a registered dietitian to make sure the best strategy is used to accomplish your weight goals.

Weight Loss Guidelines:

- Keep a food journal and record everything you eat along with your physical activity.
- Reduce calories by 200 to 250 per day.
- If you're not currently strength training, add at least two sessions per week.
- Aim for ½- to 1-pound weight loss per week. Slow losses that are maintained are better than rapid losses that are quickly regained.

Individual calorie needs vary. Here's a sample 2000-calorie menu for an athlete who wants to lose weight:

Breakfast	Calories	Lunch	Calories	Dinner	Calories
Orange juice, 1 c.	110	Ham sandwich		Broiled flank steak, 3½ oz.	225
Raisin Bran, 1½ c.	295	ham, 3 slices	65	Baked sweet potato	115
Fat-free milk, 1 c.	85	tomato, 1 slice	5	Butter, 1 T.	100
Banana, small	90	mustard, 2 tsp.	10	Peas, ½ c.	60
		light mayonnaise, 1 T.	50	Carrot sticks, ½ c.	30
		lettuce	0	Fat-free milk, 1 c.	85
		wheat bread, 2 slices	160		
		Fat-free milk, 1 c.	85	Snack	Calories
		Apple	80	String cheese, 1 oz.	80
		Tomato soup, 1 c.	60	Pear	100
				Total calories:	1990
				Percent carbohydrates:	63



Nutrition information taken from *Bowes & Church's Food Values of Portions Commonly Used*, 17th Edition.



Weight Gain

The main goal for increasing body weight is to add more muscle. This is accomplished through more strength training and eating more calories.

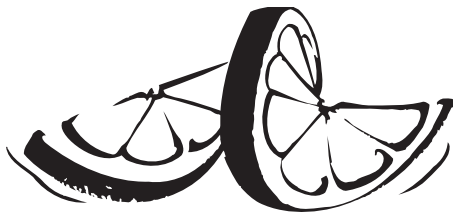
Bulking Up the Healthy Way

Many athletes struggle with weight gain because they feel that all they do is eat. These tips can help:

- Combine strength training with a diet that includes foods from each of the food groups including nutrient-rich protein sources such as lean meats, reduced-fat or low-fat dairy, fish, eggs, nuts and beans.
- Eat an extra 500 to 1000 calories per day.
- Eat regularly — three meals and three snacks daily.
- Eat to satisfy your hunger — and then a little more.
- If you skip a meal you miss the opportunity for calories.
- Eating extra carbohydrates will provide fuel for working muscles.

Selecting calorie-rich foods adds up. For example:

- Granola (220) has more calories than bran flakes (90)
- A banana (105) has more calories than an orange (60)
- Peas (60) have more calories than broccoli (25)



Individual calorie needs vary. Here's a sample 5000-calorie menu for an athlete who wants to gain weight:

Breakfast	Calories	Snack	Calories
Pancakes, 3	240	Whole grain crackers, 6	100
Syrup, ¼ c.	200	Swiss cheese, 2 oz.	210
Butter, 1 T.	100	Dried apricots, 10	80
Scrambled egg, 1	100	Cranapple juice, 1 c.	130
Orange juice, 1 c.	110		
Reduced-fat milk, 1 c.	120	Dinner	Calories
		Split pea soup, ½ c.	180
		Roast beef, 4 oz.	190
		Mashed potatoes, 2 c.	440
		Gravy, ½ c.	30
		Corn, 1 c.	130
		Pear, 1	100
		Oatmeal raisin cookies, 2	130
		Reduced-fat chocolate milk, 2 c.	360
		Snack	Calories
		Granola w/ raisins, ½ c.	260
		Frozen yogurt, 1 c.	220
		Total calories:	5140
		Percent carb:	62

Nutrition information taken from *Bowes & Church's Food Values of Portions Commonly Used, 17th Edition.*

? Ask the Sports Dietitian

Q: *How can I lose weight and keep it off?*

A: Don't be fooled by fad diets — some may hurt your performance rather than help. Losing weight slowly, at the rate of ½ pound per week, keeps your energy levels up, hunger down and helps to meet your goals. If you're not currently strength training, add at least two sessions per week.

Q: *Don't I need to eat more protein to build muscle?*

A: Simply eating a high-protein diet or taking protein supplements will not build muscle. The winning formula is a combination of foods that contain nutrient-rich sources of protein and extra calories along with strength training. Overloading muscle with resistance exercise makes muscles bigger. Protein from foods such as milk, yogurt, lean meat, fish, eggs and beans supplies the building blocks for muscle and the extra calories fuel your workouts.

