

Gaining Weight

Why?

“Why do you want to gain weight?” This is the first question you need to ask yourself. Whatever your reason is, may it be to fit in your clothes again or because some important event is coming up or maybe just because you want to be healthier, it is your personal reason and you have to feel good about it. First find the why and then start planning your diet & exercises. If you need to gain weight because your doctor said so, that might not be enough to motivate you. When someone else tells us that we need to do something to change ourselves, we’re often not motivated because it is not out of our own will.



Yes, you know you need to gain weight to become healthy, however the first step should be yours and not because someone told you so. Find your own personal motivation and then start planning.

Another question you have to ask yourself is *“Why am I not able to gain weight easily? Do I know the cause of my weight loss?”*

Once again, if you know the cause you know how to solve it. Maybe your metabolism is very fast or maybe you have been so conscious about your diet that you thought you were living healthy but you weren’t.

Find the reason and your motivation and start planning!

When?

When you have found your motivation, you can now start planning. Don’t aim on a weight gain of more than *0,5kg per week*, as it is not healthy. If you have a special event coming up (eg. your wedding), then don’t start too late as you most likely won’t achieve your goal which will result in disappointment. Count about a gain of 0.5kg per week. Now you can start planning.

Even if you aren't doing it for a special event, then still you can set a deadline as it will motivate you. Your health is also a pretty good motivation as you don't want to end up in a hospital because you're underfed.

Eg. You want to gain 10kg so that you can look fabulous at that event on 30th June. Start calculating, 10kg divided by 1kg is 10 weeks, a miscellaneous of 0.5kg so you have to count at least 20 weeks. Make it 30 to be sure, as you never know what will come across your path. Thirty weeks is about 7.5 month. This means that you have to start dieting around November.

Which?

People think it is easy to gain weight, *"It can't be that difficult. Just eat a lot and a lot of junk food or a lot of oil containing things and you'll be gaining just like that!"*

But is it all that healthy to go binge eating and eating the unhealthy stuff? Absolutely not! First things first, never compromise your health.



If the reason is why you are underweight is because you have been 'starving' yourself, then you have to gradually take bigger portions during your meal. Why gradually? Well, you have not been eating the amounts that you need according to your height, gender, age and activity level so your stomach has shrunk a lot. If you start

overeating yourself you'll undergo stomach pain, nausea, headaches, disturbed digestion, developing diabetes, etc. I think we can all agree that you don't want that. That is why it is important to increase your intake gradually.

"I have read that this product x will let me gain weight more easily. I will use this and just keep my previous diet."

There is no such thing as a wonder pill that will let you gain weight without any effort. There are supplements that let you gain more easily if you for example have a medical condition which let

you lose weight easily. But, remember, any kind of diet doesn't come without effort. Even for gaining weight you need to work hard because you want to keep it healthy. When you go binge eating and eating junk food, you bring mostly your heart in danger as fat is very dangerous for your heart.

"So, then which diet do I have to follow?" This depends on how much you want to gain, your age, your gender, your activity level. The most important thing to remember is that your diet always has to be natural and clean.

How?

Do you want to gain weight and achieve your goal only once? Or do you want to keep your healthy weight? I think we all can agree that you want to ***stay the new you***. Though it isn't always easy, but when you keep setting new goals you'll motivate yourself every time. Again I mention, do not aim on gaining more than 0,5kg per week, as it is not healthy. Your body needs to be able to adapt to the changes it's going through. If you go binge eating and gain 3kg per week, you might be very optimistic and happy BUT!!! you have brought your health in danger. Your immune system will go down and as mentioned before you will eventually bring your heart in high risk.

A diet should ***never*** contain ***more than 300 additional calories per day for men and 200 additional calories per day for women***.

Above that you will start compromising your health and heart. Immune system will go down, heart will become in danger, stomach ache, headache, intoxication, etc. So be sure

never to take more than 300/200 additional calories per day as recommended for your gender.

2000 calories of junk is not the same as 2000 calories of healthy nutritious foods



As I can't give all possible combinations (it are more than a 1000 combination), you can check on http://www.freedieting.com/tools/weight_gain_calculator.htm how many calories exact you need for your height, weight, gender and age.

"What after I reached my goal?" Congratulations!! Now you want to stay like this right? The moment that you reach your goal you might be super euphoric and you might say to yourself *"And now I deserve to go crazy!"*

Hold it right there! Yes, you have reached your goal and yes you can be very proud on yourself, however, your body just went through a gradual change to achieve your weight gain. If you go, back to your previous routine, you will destroy everything you have worked on for the past weeks or months. Just as starting slow, you also have to build off slow. Your **stomach has expand** because your intake was more so you need to shrink it slow. Don't get scared with the term '**shrink**', if you do it right your stomach will shrink not you. Gradually you have to reduce your calorie intake again to the point that you are '**allowed**' to maintain this new healthy weight. Not everyone needs as many calories. It yet again depends on your age, gender and activity.

Diet

1. Nutritions

Keeping up your nutritions are very **important**, as they are there to keep you healthy. Never skip any food group, just eat more of some. The food pyramid you most likely know already but nevertheless:



- The **top** (optional food) of the pyramid should be consumed the **least**. Don't cut it, but don't overdo it either.

- The **grain** part is important as well, however also **don't overdo** it, as this is the carbs section and carbs are put in sugars when they're not processed. Aim for the *whole grain and unrefined ones*, skip white rice, white bread, white pasta...
- **Vegetables** you can eat **as much as you want** as they are full of vitamins, only a few contain carbs and proteins as well which make them a good addition to your health. It's better to have those healthy proteins and carbs than artificial ones or those out of processed food.
- **Fruits** are important for your vitamin intake, but they have a high sugar level. **Don't eat more than 3 pieces** of fruit each day as otherwise your sugar level will go higher than needed.
- When it comes to **meat and fish**, this is a very important intake for your daily **protein**. Go for the **lean meat and white fish** as they contain the least in fats. If you are a vegetarian, no problem, lentils, chickpeas, eggs (if you can eat those) are examples of foods that contain a good level of protein.
- The dairy section is not as important as you might think. Don't get mistaken with "*you have to drink milk everyday for your calcium*", this is wrong. The moment you are full-grown (around the age of 16), you don't need as much milk anymore as before. It even can harm your bones as it will brake down your calcium. You **don't need** everyday twice a day milk.

2. Workout

What else is **important**, workout. Whether you go walking for 1h, running for 30min or going for gym for 1-1.5h, that is all perfectly fine, but take your workout as **serious** as your diet. Only dieting will let you gain weight, but you will gain fat first. Your muscles are important to keep for your health and daily movement. Plus, muscles are heavier in weight than fat is and they're healthy for you.

"But muscles will also make me look like a pumped up hulk. I will not do gym."

Wrong, wrong, wrong. Muscles weigh more, they're healthy for you. It makes you stronger, firm and your immune system will be better. You will also not look like a pumped up hulk, for that a lot of dedication, very strict diet and supplements are needed, which you don't do if you are normal dieting. Don't be afraid to put some weights during your gym session, you won't become like a hulk. Just don't overdo it, don't be too confident, you want to be able to do gym for a long time not only 1 time.

Depending on how many weight you want/have to gain, it is recommended to implement gym for about 30min-1h. For those who are underweight it is important to first lose the amount of weight to bring you between the **BMI of 19-21**, before you start aiming to develop muscles.

If you are in the level of **severe underweight** take it slow with any kind of exercise but also don't think *"Yes! I don't have to do exercise!"*. That is not the case. The reason why you have to take it **slow**, is because your body is weak and already doesn't have many muscles. Your heart and lungs are weak and every exercise is exhausting for you as your heart is already trying its best to keep you simply alive. Therefore it is better to start with gym that is **less harmful** at this stage. Think about going for a walk of 30min or going by bicycle for short distances. Until you have come to the **BMI of 20-23** you can start doing more intensive gym.

NOTE: When you have done your cardio or went to the gym, see it as a quicker process of achieving your goal. Don't see it as *"Oh, I have gained some muscle so I'm eligible now to eat something greasy. After my workout let me get myself a treat!"* **DON'T DO THAT!** It is easier to gain fat than to gain muscle, this means that your 1-2h workout has been for nothing.

3. Drinking

It is everywhere, *"Dieting? Drink as much water as you can!"*, and it is completely true! Drink water throughout the day, approx **1.5-2L a day**. You are a coffee or tea drinker? No problem, you can still drink this but in limited amount. Prefer to drink **black coffee** (no sugar and no milk or milk creamer), and when it comes to tea prefer to drink **green tea** (with or without flavour but no or



limited added sugar). Milk creamer that you put in your coffee is full fat and brings nothing good to your diet, though if you can't drink coffee without that then choose skimmed milk instead, and it should be more coffee than milk. Same counts for sugar, don't put 4-5-6 or more spoons/cubes/sachets, 1 is the maximum amount if you really can't go without.

Why green tea? Green tea has a lot of antioxidants which will purify your system, it quasi flushes away the bad things. Don't drink more than 3-4 cups of coffee/tea a day.

Avoid alcohol, sugar containing drinks like softdrinks and juice. However, you can drink juice (limited amount) but only freshly made juice.

4. Supplements

Try to **avoid** all the chemical supplements like pills and '*packed*' diets. We have all seen it and maybe you have also tried it, hence I even tried all kind of diets like these, but they're **everything except good** for your health. Mostly those special meals and shakes contain only protein and nothing much of the other nutritions you need. The people selling this will say it will work and that it is healthy, but it is not. So stay away of those '*meal replacers*' and choose the food that IS healthy and tasty.

Is dieting and gym not giving you what you want? Then try to take **whey protein**. This is made out of natural ingredients and protein is good for you.

5. Diet plan

Like I mentioned before, your diet should **not** contain **more than 300/200 additional calories a day considering your gender**. First you need to know how many calories you take normally. You don't have a list of foods where you can find all the calories? No problem, there are many **apps** these days which you can download and they calculate the calories for you. You only have to add the food item and the quantity. There are many but my favourite is **MyFitnessPal** (available for Android and iOS).

As we live in India we have different food items, even the Indian food is findable there! You can also see how many protein, fat, vitamins, etc the food item has. You fill in your details (height, weight, goal, active state...) and it calculates how many calories, protein, fat, carbs etc you need every day to achieve your goal.

Everyday you have to fill in what you ate during the day (breakfast, lunch, dinner, snacks), even you can fill in your water intake and the exercises you did (kind + duration). Whenever you fill something it will calculate the total calories and how much you have left.

5.1. Daily Intake

As mentioned before there are many combinations to get your ideal daily calorie intake. The following charts are those for a 26 y/o person (male and female) of 180cm weighing 58kg with a moderately active live (3-5 times a week sport).

The chart is between 2400-2650 kcal, depending on which combinations you take.

Breakfast	2 carb intake + 1.5 dairy intake + 2 protein intake	carb: 4 slices of bread or 80g oats or 80g cereals dairy: 1 glas of milk (unsweetened) or 200g yoghurt (unsweetened!) protein: 2tbs peanut butter or 4 egg whites or 200g boiled chicken
Snack	1 fruit or 2 vegetable	any kind, smaller fruits like grapes should not be more than 10pcs., don't overdo with banana and avocado idem dito.
Lunch	2 carb intake + 1 vegetables intake + 2 protein intake	carb: 3-4 medium potato or 250g boiled rice or 240g pasta or 4 slices of bread/roti vegetable: 300g any kind, don't overdo with peas and other of these kind. You can boil it, season it (not too much salt), but don't use more than 1tbs/pers of oil. protein: 240g chicken or 250g white fish or 4egg whites or 200g boiled pulses. Season as much as you want (not too much salt) and not more than 1tbs/pers of oil.
Snack	1 fruit or 2 vegetable	any kind, smaller fruits like grapes should not be more than 10pcs., don't overdo with banana and avocado idem dito.
Dinner	2 carb intake + 1 vegetables intake + 2 protein intake	carb: 3-4 medium potato or 250g boiled rice or 240g pasta or 4 slices of bread/roti vegetable: 300g any kind, don't overdo with peas and other of these kind. You can boil it, season it (not too much salt), but don't use more than 1tbs/pers of oil. protein: 240g chicken or 250g white fish or 4egg whites or 200g boiled pulses. Season as much as you want (not too much salt) and not more than 1tbs/pers of oil.
Snack	whey protein if you take this supplement	any flavour
Exercise	15min cardio + 45min gym (with weights)	cardio: running or cycle gym: 2 muscle groups (don't do legs and abs in one day)

5.2.Sample Diet Plan (Indian non-veg)

Breakfast	4 slices of bread + 2tbs peanut butter + 150g yoghurt	800kcal
Snack	4 carrots	119kcal
Lunch	4 roti (without ghee)+ 100g baigan bharta + 50g salad (no onion) + 200g channa daal	560kcal
Snack	1 banana	125kcal
Dinner	chicken biryani (made with 200g chicken, 250g rice and veggies of own choice)	700kcal
Snack	whey protein	133kcal
		2437kcal

5.3. Sample Diet Plan (Western non-veg)

Breakfast	4 slices of bread + 4tbs peanut butter + 200g yoghurt	800kcal
Snack	4 carrots	119kcal
Lunch	4 medium jacked potatoes (1tsp butter/ each allowed) + 240g grilled chicken (seasoning by choice) + 300g stewed French beans with 1 onion	530kcal
Snack	1 banana	120kcal
Dinner	4 slices of bread + 200g grilled cod filet + 1 slice of gouda cheese + salad (with light dressing)	710kcal
Snack	whey protein	133kcal
		2412kcal