How to gain weight with Type 2 diabetes

If you have Type 2 diabetes it is important for you to keep a healthy body weight. While some people may need to lose weight, others might need to gain some weight to stay strong and well into older age. Talk to a doctor, diabetes educator or accredited practising dietitian if you are unsure about your weight.

The following ideas can help if you need to gain weight.

Eat regular meals/snacks

- Eat more often if you can’t eat a lot at once. Try three small meals and three small snacks each day.
- Try to eat at regular times, even if you don’t feel hungry.
- Choose a variety of foods from each of the five food groups every day.

Boost energy and protein in meals and snacks

Some foods can help you gain weight without causing big rises in your blood glucose (sugar) levels. These include foods high in:

- protein such as meat, fish, chicken, legumes, eggs, nuts and full cream dairy foods
- energy such as margarine, avocado, nut butters, oil and salad dressing.

Try some of the following ideas for high energy, high protein meals or snacks:

- spread bread or crackers thickly with avocado, cream cheese, peanut butter or dip
- add extra oil, margarine, grated cheese or a cheesy sauce to vegetables
- eggs or baked beans on multigrain toast as an easy meal or snack
- a sandwich filled with curried egg, salmon, lean ham or sliced roast beef.

Make every mouthful count. Don’t fill up on low energy foods (like plain fruits and vegetables) or low energy fluids (like water, tea, coffee and diet drinks).
Try high energy and high protein drinks

- If you sometimes find it hard to eat solid food, try drinks and soups higher in energy and protein.
- Try milkshakes, fruit smoothies or an all-milk Milo® or coffee.
- Boost your milk drink by adding milk powder; add two tablespoons of milk powder to 250mL of milk.
- Make creamy or chunky soups with meat, vegetables and legumes such as kidney beans, split peas or chickpeas. Milk powder can also be added to creamy soups.