

Foss Is Boss: A Safe Guide To Healthy Weight Gain

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It would be safe to say that the question I get asked the most by parents and players is about nutrition. While getting into a structured weight training routine will yield results in strength, it will do little to increase weight gain. In order to gain weight you have to eat. This blog should give players a basic plan to get the best results from your hard work in the gym.

To gain weight, you need to consume more calories than you are burning. So, we either move less (not an option for athletes) or eat more. The first thing you need to figure out is how many calories you are burning, so you can then find out how many calories you need to consume. The average teenager burns about 15 calories per day/per pound of body weight. This means that a sedentary 150lb. kid needs to eat 2,250 calories a day just to maintain his/her weight.

So what's the magic number? There isn't one. A lot of this is trial and error. What has worked for my clients is 25 calories per pound of body weight/per day. Consuming 25 calories per day/per pound of body weight should see you gain about a pound per week. The best way to do measure your progress is to weigh yourself at the beginning of the each week and then again at the end of each week. If you are not seeing the results you want then you need to adjust your plan. Make sure you write down your weights every week.

Protein is another important component of gaining lean body mass. To build lean body mass, athletes need to eat *at least* 1 gram of protein per pound of body weight. I recommend 1 ½ grams per pound of body weight/per day. For weight gain, about 20% of your calories should come from protein.

Carbohydrates are an important component as well. Carbohydrates are basically the energy we use to function. Think of it as gas in the fuel tank of your car. If you are not consuming enough carbs your body will use the protein you eat as an energy source, which is not good. For weight gain, about 60% of your calories should come from carbohydrates.

Fats are also an important part of any diet. It is vital in vitamin absorption and helps protect vital organs from injury to name a few. Think of this as the oil in the

car. It acts as a lubricant and makes everything run smoothly. For weight gain, about 20% of your calories should come from fats.

Preparation is another area where programs succeed or fail. Having a plan for the week is this simplest way to see results. How do you know if you're in a surplus of calories if you don't write it down? Keeping a journal of what you ate, the portions you consumed, and the times of the day you ate will all help in seeing great results. How can you do well on the test if you don't take notes during class?

Here is the formula to figure out how many calories you need to eat per day to see a 1-pound weight increase per week.

1. Body weight X 25 = the amount of calories you need to consume per day

Example:

- 150lb. athlete X 25 = 3,750 calories per day

Here are the formulas to figure out what your macronutrients (protein, carbs, and fats) should be each day.

To figure out how much protein you need to consume:

1. The number of calories you need to consume X .20 = calories from protein
2. Calories from protein divided by 4 = amount of protein in grams

Example:

- 3,750 calories X .20 = 750 calories from protein
- 750 calories from protein / 4 = 188 grams of protein

To figure out how many carbohydrates: you need to consume:

1. The number of calories you need to consume X .60 = calories from carbs
2. Calories from carbs / 4 = amount of carbs per day

Example:

- 3,750 calories X .60 = 2,250 calories from carbohydrates
- 2,250 calories from carbs / 562 = grams of carbs

To figure out how much fat you need to consume:

1. The number of calories you need to consume X .20 = calories from fats
2. Calories from carbs divided by 9 = amount of carbs in grams

Example:

- $3,750 \text{ calories} \times .20 = 750 \text{ calories from fat}$
- $750 \text{ calories from fat} / 9 = 83 \text{ grams of fat}$

Below I have provided a basic meal plan for a 150 lb. athlete who is looking to gain weight. You may use this as a reference point and adjust it to suit your needs based on the formulas above. This meal plan does not take into consideration any food allergies so please make the necessary changes.

Sample meal plan for a 3,750 calorie diet:

Breakfast:

- 1 cup of oatmeal
- 2 eggs, cooked
- 8oz. glass of 2% milk
~ or ~
"On the go" shake
- Blend the following ingredients and you got a quick meal for breakfast
 - 1 scoop of vanilla flavored whey protein
 - 8 oz. of apple juice
 - 1 cup of oatmeal
 - 1 banana
 - 2 tbsp. of peanut butter
 - Handful of ice cubes

AM Snack:

- Peanut Butter & jelly sandwich
- Banana
- 8 oz. of 2% chocolate milk

Lunch

- Sandwich
 - 4-6 slices of deli meat
 - 2 slices of cheese
 - 2 slices of whole grain bread
 - Vegetables
 - Condiments
- Small bag of chips or pretzels

PM Snack

- 2 oz. of almonds or mixed nuts
- Piece of fruit

Post-Workout Shake

- Mix together and have within 30 minutes after your workout
 - 8 oz. of apple juice
 - 2 scoops of whey protein (no more than 30 grams)

Dinner

- 6-8 oz. of meat
- 2 cups of complex carbs (starches, whole grains, pasta)
- Vegetables, as much as you'd like

Bedtime Snack

- 16 oz. glass of 2% chocolate milk
- 1 cup of cereal

This is just a general guideline. As you are monitoring your weight and food intake you may need to make adjustments. A realistic and healthy goal is about 1 lb. per week. Not every person is the same. If you are not seeing the results that you want I would recommend adding more food as opposed to moving less. Don't forget that lacrosse is a skills sport and bigger is not always better. Your goal should be to increase your muscle gain while still maintaining your flexibility and speed.